

UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
2006-07 FACULTY SENATE

FEBRUARY 5, 2007

MINUTES SUMMARY

I. Roll – The following senators were absent: Balling, Bartos, Burger, Calculator, Carr, Ferber, Morgan, Quigley, Reid and Schiller. Excused were Bachrach, Brunet, Haskins, Jolley, Miller, Robertson, Sharkey and Tenczar. Joanne Curran-Celentano was a guest.

II. Remarks by and questions to the chair – The senate chair met with the Academic Leadership Council on January 30th and reported to them that, since the Faculty Senate will not deliberate on the Discovery Program until after work to rule and since approval by the Faculty Senate is required in order to change the requirements to the Discovery Program categories, implementation of the program will likely not be possible for 2008/09. The senate chair and vice chair met with the university president last week. She will continue her interim presidency at least until June 1 and perhaps as long as another year if needed. The senate chair and vice chair told her that faculty want a presidential candidate who can implement the university's vision for the future, not create that vision. The Faculty Senate had done some work on the vision last summer, but further work on that is in abeyance pending the end of the contract negotiations. The senate chair added that the initial description of the Discovery Program on the university website is worded so that the reader might not realize that the program has not been approved, unless the reader followed an additional link for clarification. The president was responsive to this issue and made the distinction between the Discovery Program and the concept of discovery as a theme at UNH.

The Academic Freedom Forum has been rescheduled to allow more planning time and will be held in the Piscataqua Room in Holloway Commons on Wednesday, February 28, from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. Regarding the contract negotiations, the parties did not agree on a fact finder and have asked for an appointed fact finder. The fact finder's report will require about two months to generate and will not be binding. A senator said that former administrators who become or return as faculty members retain the higher administrative salary. Thus departments which have many former administrators appear to have top-heavy salaries. Should the salaries for former administrators who are appointed to academic departments be distributed among all departments of the university? A senator said that such a policy was used in the past. Should former administrators retain their high salaries? Since these are bargainable issues, the senate will take no action on them. Nationally, administrators are normally hired with tenured faculty status.

The grade point average for UNH students is now a 3.0. Four year ago the senate's Student Affairs Committee produced a report which will be sent to all senators and which found that grades, especially B's and A's, have risen significantly over a twenty-year period. A senator said that there is even one large course in which all students receive A's. How does the grade point average compare among the schools and colleges at UNH and also between general education and non-general-education courses and between writing intensive and non-writing-intensive courses? The senate chair will ask the Office of Institutional Research to provide information on those issues. Also, the University Writing Center did a survey which included the perception of faculty and students on grading practices in writing-intensive courses.

A new dean for WSBE, Daniel Innis, will start on July 1. A new dean is expected to be named for COLSA within ten days. Searches have begun for deans of the university library and the School of

Health and Human Services. A senator expressed concern that most of the Library Dean's Search Committee members are from the library and asked if that is standard practice. The library is important to faculty in the whole university, but the only members of the committee not from the library are Brigitte Bailey from Liberal Arts, the CEPS dean, and a faculty emeritus. Please give input to Senator Bailey on your priorities for the library dean's position. The search advertisement is posted on the web. The senate chair will express to the provost the concerns about the number of non-library faculty on the search committee.

The senate chair received a memo from Roger Beattie giving information about how minority students are doing at UNH. There were 202 freshmen minority students at UNH last semester. Twenty seven of those were suspended or excluded, and forty-nine received honors status with a 3.2 grade point average or higher. Of 468 sophomore, junior and senior minority students, twelve were suspended or excluded; and ninety-nine received honors status.

The university administration has sent a memo directing that faculty and staff contact the president's office prior to sending invitations to many categories of persons including many national and state office holders and candidates and even Durham town council members. However, a number of faculty have such people speak to their classes on a regular basis and do not want to ask for the administration's permission to do so, because this is an interference in academic matters. The senate chair will discuss this issue with Vice President Murray and ask that the administration send another letter with revised wording. Also, some type of guidance should be given to faculty, departments, and political candidates, so that visits by political candidates and their security people do not disrupt classes, as has happened in the past.

III. Committee charges – The EOS policy proposal documentation was sent to all senators, and the charge has been sent to the Research and Public Service Committee for action when work to rule ends. Also, the Agenda Committee will set up an ad-hoc committee, to consider whether formal procedures for quasi-judicial senate actions are needed and, if so, what protections should be afforded to the Faculty Senate and the administration, if the senate were to consider any quasi-judicial action. This matter is senate business rather than shared governance and should be dealt with during work to rule. Todd DeMitchell will chair that ad-hoc committee, and Senators Feldman and Wrighton will be members.

The senate's Academic Affairs Committee is being charged to review, when work to rule is over, the question of a possible interdisciplinary program on 9/11 and terrorism. The senate's Student Affairs Committee is being charged to consider, when work to rule is over, whether the university has suitable systems in place for international students and their recruitment. The senate's Academic Affairs Committee and Student Affairs Committee are being charged to review, when work to rule is over, whether the senate should 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. In this proposal, any national merit scholar who comes to UNH would 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.

IV. Minutes – A senator asked for modification of the minutes of the last Faculty Senate meeting, in order not to imply that all senators had objected to the provost's comments in his recent letter about faculty obligations during work to rule. The senate unanimously approved the minutes of the

last Faculty Senate meeting as amended, changing a sentence in the last paragraph of item V to read “Today some senators said that the statement in the provost’s letter is incorrect and inappropriate”.

V. COLSA reorganization – A formal recommendation for the COLSA strategic plan and structural reorganization has been sent to the faculty. When given a choice only between this reorganization plan and a plan put forward by the administration, the COLSA faculty voted to approve the new department organizational structure recommended by the faculty committee, with three departments plus the Thompson School and agricultural programs. All the farms would be managed centrally, with a coordinating council. There would be many overlapping, interdisciplinary programs; and there is a strategic plan to go with the structural reorganization. At the next senate meeting, the history and status of COLSA departments can be discussed.

If the administration were proposing to eliminate departments and their faculty, then the faculty contract would require certain steps and time lines; but that is not occurring at present. Programs are being restructured rather than eliminated, and therefore the displacement clause in the contract should not be activated. There will be a joint meeting of the Agenda Committee and the AAUP in March regarding the reorganization; and that meeting should not be confused with a displacement action, because the reorganization does not indicate that current faculty are being eliminated. The senate chair will reconfirm that with the provost.

VI. Presidential search – The senate vice chair said that he does not see that any individual or group had inappropriate influence on whether or not candidates for president were deemed to be a good fit. The search committee is moving toward small changes in the search process, to make it more effective and give more time to get to know the candidates. A senator’s idea of anonymous email discussion with candidates was warmly received and might be done in the future. The committee is reconsidering the criteria and also the candidates from the original pool, and the consultants are working to find new candidates as well. The revised search process will be documented soon.

VII. Parking spaces – A faculty member sent a request that the senate consider a resolution calling on Parking Services to stop taking away parking spaces from faculty/staff lots (such as the Alumni Center lot) for special events and to explain why attendees at, for example, a nursing conference should have superior parking rights to people who teach and work here. That is a bargainable issue, and there may be an existing agreement regarding lot closure. The senate chair will share with the AAUP leadership the concerns about this matter.

VIII. Adjournment – Today’s meeting was adjourned.