

UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
2006-07 FACULTY SENATE

MARCH 5, 2007

MINUTES SUMMARY

I. Roll – The following senators were absent: Afolayan, Balling, Burger, Calculator, Chaston, Ferber, Griswold, Kaen, Kistler, Morgan, Niser, Robertson, Schiller, Tenczar, and Walsh. Excused were Bachrach, Bailey, Becker, Carr, Dolan, Haskins, and Naumes. Katherine Steere was a guest.

II. Remarks by and questions to the chair – The senate chair said that the AAUP and the administration have agreed that there is a need for the proposed meeting between the AAUP, the Agenda Committee and the administration regarding COLSA displacement; and the meeting is expected to be held during the week of March 19th.

John Aber has indicated that he will step down as vice president for research and public service. At last week's meeting with the Academic Leadership Council, the senate chair conveyed to the administration the sentiment of the Agenda Committee that there should be a full search committee and that the Faculty Senate should be represented on that committee, since the position of vice president for research includes responsibilities for the protection of academic freedom. Also, a suggestion was made that the position title be changed to vice president for research, public service and artistry.

The senate's University Curriculum and Academic Policies Committee has unanimously recommended approval of a new major in society and politics, at UNH-Manchester. The senate chair made clear to the Academic Leadership Council that, like all new programs, this proposed major must now be submitted to the Faculty Senate for approval. The chair reviewed for the Academic Leadership Council the process of approvals for all new academic programs, including the proposed new program in international gastronomy and the proposed School of Community and Environmental Planning and School of Marine Sciences.

The Central Budget Committee is considering overhead cost returns but has not had the usual faculty representation since the start of work to rule. Now, the Agenda Committee has agreed to exempt the Central Budget Committee from the recall due to work to rule, as provided for in senate motion XI-M3 on 11/13/06. Therefore the senate chair will begin attending the CBC meetings on March 6 and is urging other faculty representatives to do so as well.

At the behest of the Agenda Committee, the senate chair brought up to the Academic Leadership Council the issue of faculty orientation on RCM matters; and there was substantial agreement that faculty need a primer on RCM, to assist them as they make decisions on such issues as office location, because there could be dramatic effects on where overhead cost returns go. There is an RCM 101 on the UNH web page, and the administration will review this to ensure that it is accessible and clear.

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

IV. Presidential search – The senate vice chair said that the search committee is making good progress on the search. If necessary the current interim president may stay on for another year, but the committee may be able to complete the search by this summer.

V. Potluck dinner for Student Senate – The Agenda Committee suggests that the senate hold a potluck supper for the sixty student senators on Monday, April 16, at 5:30 p.m. in room 18, the MUB Entertainment Center. The senate chair asked the faculty senators to bring food to that dinner and to state in advance what the dish will be, in order to avoid duplication. There will not be a stove available, but there will be connections for crock pots. The Student Senate observer at the Faculty Senate said that she will notify the student senators about the dinner which will be held for them.

VI. UCAPC – It is now time to start the election process for new representatives to the senate's University Curriculum and Academic Policies Committee, which is an appeals and fact-finding body to consider academic and curricular matters which have inter-college and/or campus-wide effects or which are likely to affect the quality or integrity of the realization of the university's academic mission. UCAPC is a senate committee and gives its recommendations to the Faculty Senate. The senate then considers the UCAPC's recommendations, acts and forwards the senate's recommendations to the vice president for academic affairs. UCAPC is exempt from the recall due to work to rule, as stated in the Faculty Senate minutes of 11/27/06.

VII. Motion on electronic grade submission – **David Feldman moved and Frank Birch seconded that the drop-down menu on the electronic grade submission form should show the description of what the letter grades mean, rather than the letter grades themselves.** A senator suggested that the software should deal automatically with issues such as classes in which all students receive A's, perhaps changing the grades to C's. Another senator said that he had seen data collected by the UNH administration showing that, in many colleges, A's are given more often than any other single grade. A professor pointed out that, since the "A-plus" grade does not exist, that conflates the "A" grade statistically. Should the issue of grade inflation be considered along with the issue of course evaluations? In addition to the letter grade, should the transcript show the grade distribution for each class or the student's rank in the class? A professor said that, in some classes, to rank the students would be a disservice. In some small, upper-level courses in certain years, the students do deserve B's and A's, because those students are bright and hard working. Not every group of students is the same, and so the average grade will differ. Therefore there should not be a mechanical system of second-guessing professors' grades.

A senator said that it might be okay to add more information beside the letter grade but not to substitute ranks for grades. A senator said that, if faculty wrote a paragraph instead of assigning a letter grade, that would take care of problems related to pickaprof.com. However, such a solution could have legal ramifications. A professor said that he will vote against the above motion, because he is in favor of having the task force look at all the related issues together, as soon as work to rule ends. Since most other institutions of higher learning give letter grades, UNH students need letter grades for scholarships and other matters; and so it would create problems for students if this university did away with the traditional letter grades. Another professor said that we should not discuss remedies until we have defined the problem. Therefore

he opposes the motion and prefers a thorough review by a task force. The proposer of the motion said that his motion would not affect the task force and only says that the drop-down menu on the electronic grade submission form should show the description of what the letter grades mean, in order to remind faculty of the definition of those grades. Other faculty said that they do not need a reminder of the definitions. **The senate voted, unanimously except for one abstention, to table the motion until the next senate meeting.**

VIII. Oak Room – The administration has announced a plan to close the Oak Room. **Elizabeth Slomba moved and Cesar Rebellon seconded that David May, who is the executive director of business affairs and who administers the Oak Room, should be invited to the earliest available Faculty Senate meeting to discuss the proposed closing of the Oak Room.** As stated in the 10/30/06 Faculty Senate minutes, the Faculty Senate has its own issues separate from those of the administration; and the Faculty Senate has a responsibility to do its own business. Therefore senators agreed that this motion would not violate the spirit of work to rule. **The motion passed unanimously except for one abstention.**

IX. Adjournment – Today's meeting was adjourned.