

UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
2007-08 FACULTY SENATE

DECEMBER 3, 2007

MINUTES SUMMARY

I. Roll – The following senators were absent: Afolayan, Baldwin, Barcelona, Dowd, Hamlin, Huang, Kaen, Nimmo, Park, Sample, Tenczar, Walsh and Zunz. Excused were Bachrach, Bailey, Barrows, Becker, Echt, Lieber, and Slomba. Guests were Alissa Marchant and Kevin Linton of Student Senate.

II. Remarks by and questions to the chair – The potluck dinner which the Faculty Senate intended to host for the Student Senate this evening will be cancelled due to the snow storm, and the Faculty Senate will try to reschedule a get together with the Student Senate next semester. The senate chair has forwarded the senate's concerns on the field trip guidelines to Alan Ray and Leigh Anne Melanson and is awaiting their response. The co-chairs of the search committee for a new dean of the College of Liberal Arts will be Charlotte Witt of the Philosophy Department and Joe Klewicki, the CEPS dean. The senate chair said that many Liberal Arts faculty extend their thanks to the senate for its support in this matter.

The senate chair has attended a meeting of the Central Budget Committee, which is considering a summer dining and housing rate increase, a new reserves policy for RCM units, an indirect cost recovery plan, the EOS deficit and a possible bandage for that, an RCM research review, and a current budget review. The new recommended reserves policy is that six to ten percent should be held in reserve depending on the unit and its funding sources. Reserves are end-of-year surpluses which carry over from year to year and may be used to cover a subsequent year's deficit. Senators expressed concern that it would be very difficult to get reserves of six or ten percent. At a future senate meeting, perhaps faculty and administration members of the Central Budget Committee could give an overview of the committee's work.

The Institute for the Study of Earth, Oceans and Space apparently is now running a deficit of about 4.2 percent and may receive funds such as monies from the president's strategic fund, for a limited time perhaps until 2011, and a possible single lump sum from the provost's office, as well as hold-harmless mitigation and money for a director's position. Some senators expressed concern that this is a lot of dollars which will not be available for other purposes. The EOS deficit is not due to any reduction of income but rather to a change in the way funds are assessed centrally via the new RCM formula. The RCM plan was reviewed not long ago and is expected to be reviewed every five years. A senator said that, although work to rule precludes the standard invitations to administrators, the senate can ask administrators to come to the senate to discuss issues of particular concern to faculty and that perhaps the president or the vice president for financial affairs could come to the senate to discuss these EOS mitigations, subventions and such. The senate chair said that a committee is being set up to review how RCM acts to motivate or inhibit research. That committee is separate from the research strategic planning committee. The CBC is also reviewing the current UNH budget which seems to be doing fairly well at the present time.

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

IV. Student Senate – The Student Senate is considering a resolution to request that faculty post their booklists on Blackboard and allow guest access to the lists on Blackboard at least two weeks prior to the start of the spring, 2008, semester and that faculty advertise this opportunity to students. Student Senate had already passed a resolution proposing that faculty send textbook lists to both the

Durham Book Exchange and the UNH Bookstore and also that faculty make the booklists available to students before the beginning of the semester, so that students would have more options for purchasing textbooks and perhaps reducing textbook costs. Students would like to have the booklists before arriving on campus, but Blackboard is often only available to students one day before classes start. At the last Faculty Senate meeting, faculty had asked that the student leaders arrange with the UNH Computing and Information Services to provide an easily accessible webpage where faculty who are willing to do so could post the booklists in advance. The students are working on this with CIS; but that change will take time; and so the students are proposing the blackboard method as a temporary solution. A professor suggested that, if Student Senate could establish an email address to which faculty could send booklists, that would be a good solution for courses which are not on Blackboard. Student Senate will discuss this with CIS. Faculty who may be concerned about open access to their course materials on Blackboard could set the open access to apply only to the booklist and only for the two weeks before class starts.

V. Research – The senate chair said that the Faculty Senate needs to decide whether, during work to rule, the senate will nominate a member for the Research, Scholarship and Creative Activity Strategic Planning Committee. The interim vice president for research would like to have a ten-year strategic plan ready by August, and the new vice president for research is expected to be hired and start work by September. The senate declined, during work to rule, to participate in work on the Academic Plan and the NEASC Self Study but did agree to provide representatives for the president's search committee last year and the search committee for the vice president for research. Regardless of the senate's decision on committee representation, the research strategic plan will be brought to the Faculty Senate for review and input.

A senator said that doing the research strategic plan now is putting the cart before the horse and appears to be an attempt to maintain the status quo, a situation that works less well for the faculty at large and very well for the small establishment that has controlled research resources for the past ten years. A new strategic plan will set up how the university arrives at its research priorities and where it will spend its funds. He added that UNH has gotten about two hundred million dollars in federal ear-marked funds since 2000 and that there has not been enough discussion on how ear marks are developed and the results. One option would be for the Faculty Senate to participate in the Research, Scholarship and Creative Activity Strategic Planning Committee but to clarify and modify what this committee will do. He said that the purpose of the committee should be to survey the strengths and weaknesses of the UNH research organization, how it serves the university faculty, how the office of research works to further the university's goals, and what the relationship should be between the vice president for research and the provost. When the committee has defined the current situation and the new vice president for research starts work, the committee could then work with the vice president on the goals, rather than presenting an already prepared ten-year plan.

Another senator said that faculty need to influence the process at its beginnings, that a strategic plan for research is critical, and that the strategic plan will take too long to prepare after the new vice president for research is hired and gets his bearings. A professor said that the office for research should serve the interests of the faculty as a whole and not just the centers and institutes. Another senator said that, although these matters are important, the faculty have waited a very long time for a contract and should honor work to rule, not work on planning, and expect that the administration will not form strategic plans without the standard shared governance which cannot happen during work to rule. A professor suggested that the faculty should work with the committee but that the committee should do preliminary surveys and not prepare a strategic plan. He added that the

interaction of the office for research and the academic programs could use improvement and that, if a strategic plan were to be drafted now, it would build up momentum and be hard to stop. Another senator said that faculty are better off if they are involved in strategic planning from its inception.

Jeff Salloway moved and Anita Klein seconded a motion that the Faculty Senate direct the Agenda Committee to choose a representative of the senate to serve on the Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity Strategic Planning Steering Committee. After discussion of an alternative motion to decline to provide a representative during work to rule, a professor said that a third alternative would be to influence whether or not the actual strategic planning happens now. A senator said that the senate chair or the Agenda Committee should discuss this matter with the president. Rather than setting out a ten-year plan, the strategic planning steering committee could survey and study the issues so that a newly-hired vice president for research will be well informed about what the issues are. The senate chair has written the interim vice president for research that, when any strategic plan is drafted, it must be brought to the Faculty Senate for vetting. Last year the Faculty Senate passed a motion stating in part that:

The Faculty Senate will take no decisions and no actions during this period of work to rule, and the Faculty Senate expects the university administration to take no decisions and no actions on all those areas over which the faculty has primary or co-equal responsibility. Should such actions be taken, the Faculty Senate will be prepared to take appropriate action including but not limited to motions of censure and no confidence.

The senate chair said that today's senate minutes will be published and will also be sent to the interim vice president for research. A senator suggested that the senate instruct the Agenda Committee to appoint a representative but also ask the senate chair to make the president and interim vice president for research aware of the senate's concerns about the drafting of a strategic plan at this time. A professor said that the Faculty Senate should send an observer to and not a member of the committee for now and that the senate should discuss these matters further at its next meeting. Another professor said that the senate chair should discuss with the president and interim vice president that the office of research should focus on traditional research and not primarily on the big research centers and institutes. A senator said that, since the president is pouring money into EOS, the senate should ask for a specific statement from the president on the focus of the office for research. A professor added that faculty play a central role in research but that research is also bound to academic programs. If those programs are not competitive in getting good graduate assistants, that has a profound effect on both research and teaching. Support for teaching assistants is very important.

David Richman proposed a friendly amendment to the motion, to add that the senate will send the minutes of this meeting to the president and the interim vice president for research and that the senate chair will discuss the issues thoroughly with both. The maker and seconder of the original motion accepted this friendly amendment. Then Larry Prelli proposed and the maker and seconder of the original motion accepted an amendment that the senate should provide an observer to rather than a representative for the committee. After discussion, the senate passed the amended motion, with seventeen ayes, ten nays, and no abstentions. The senate chair agreed to make clear to the president and interim vice president the difference between an observer and a representative and the reasons for this choice. Today's meeting was adjourned.