

UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
2007-08 FACULTY SENATE

MARCH 24, 2008

MINUTES SUMMARY

I. Roll – The following senators were absent: Barcelona, Calculator, Dowd, Hamlin, Onosko, Park, and Walsh. Excused were Afolayan, Becker, Lane and Miller.

II. Discussion with the president, on shared governance - President Huddleston said that, as a former president of an academic or university senate and a member for many years, he has a good understanding of what shared governance means. He said that we cannot run a university without shared governance, because shared governance is the best way to make decision; and he said that the decisions should rest on a consensus. A senator said that there have been instances in the recent past when faculty who were affected by decisions have not been consulted and their work has been made more difficult by the decisions. A senator asked the president to agree that the principle of shared governance is that faculty, who will be affected by a decision or a change in policy, are consulted prior to the decision or change, which is made adversely to the reasoned view of faculty only in exceptional circumstances communicated to the faculty. The president replied that the above principle was well stated and that he did not disagree with it. He added that some kinds of decisions engage faculty more than other decisions and that, where the decisions are core to faculty, they should have the say.

A senator said that, prior to the president's coming to UNH, there was a shift in structure and process that resulted in a concentration of power in the office of the provost; and that resulted in a process of decision making in which vital areas of faculty interest have been ignored. He added that there has been a loss of faculty confidence in the process of decision making. The president replied that elsewhere faculty have gotten upset when faculty reported to other than the president. He added that how decisions are made is the most important and that decision making should be open and inclusive. A professor asked what the president sees as the mechanism for him to get input from faculty. The president replied that he relishes invitations from faculty and departments and that more formal methods are important also. He would like faculty input on this matter and said that, in the capital campaign, we should gather information from faculty about the priorities.

Another professor said that it is important to agree on the definition and process of shared governance, why it does not work when it does not, and what decisions are not part of academic freedom. The president replied that all academic policy should be part of shared governance but that, on the non-academic side, there are many issues, like in the auxiliary enterprises, that would not be part of shared governance. He added that shared governance pertains to policy making and not implementation. The professor said that the budget is the way of putting into practice our values. If we have an academic program, we must support that program. We have shared governance on academic programs but how much on the funds for those programs, study abroad for example. The president responded that he used to run study abroad programs and that, although faculty decide what the programs' academic rules should be and where we site programs, he does not recall the Faculty Senate deciding reimbursement rates. A senator replied that faculty who would be affected should be consulted, not necessarily the Faculty Senate, and

said that the advisors of the study abroad programs were not consulted before a financial decision was made which may result in the closing of some of those programs.

A professor said that UNH had a faculty dining room which was closed without consultation with faculty and that faculty do not now have a gathering place in which to eat and collaborate on campus. The president replied that the university needs to find a place for a dedicated faculty dining room. A senator said that a solution would be to budget for that as a hard item in the budget, and he added that this needs to be supported centrally as an investment in faculty collaboration. Also he said that a decision was made to eliminate the university vans which were used for field trips and other things, without consulting the affected faculty, and that, since field trips are a required part of many academic programs, how the administration addresses this problem is extremely important. A professor said that the spirit of trust and good will is damaged at this time and this is a challenge for shared governance. These issues need to be discussed and worked out. The president said that it might be good to have an off-site get together with the leaders of the Faculty Senate and administrators, to discuss how to work out these issues.

A senator said that too often shared governance has taken place only after a decision has been made and that there needs to be a commitment from the current administration to do shared governance first. The president replied that he is committed to that and added that, for example in the capital campaign, the priorities need to be decided via the faculty. The professor said that the priorities of administration often seem to have changed to a financial and corporate model, and he asked how can that be changed. The president said that the very low state funding for higher education puts the university in a defensive posture. He said that we cannot ignore those forces but that we can get the faculty engaged more in those issues and decisions. A balance needs to be attained in the budget, between avoiding a top-down structure and yet having a common space in the center for creating a vision for the university as a whole. Although RCM has its good points, we might consider some tweaks for it. A senator said that good points of RCM are its transparency and the opportunity for departments to save funds from year to year but that the idea that everything must show a profit or be dismantled is not good. Academic leadership is needed as a buffer to see what is reasonable.

A senator said that UNH is a research and teaching institution, and he asked how you decide the priorities between big research institutes and other areas of the university. The president replied that he put together the blue ribbon panel on research, to look at that question, and that he made the panel as representative as possible of the colleges and types of research. A senator said that all faculty do research and scholarship and that he is concerned that the blue ribbon panel's dialog on research will be very narrow if it does not include faculty in liberal arts. The president stated that the panel includes Burt Feintuch and Jan Nisbet and that a Faculty Senate representative, who does not attend due to work to rule, was also included. A professor said that some departments have a strong obligation to serve the needs of the state via research; but that does not bring in much money; and the department is being discouraged from doing the research for the state. The president and the professor agreed that we need to come together and work through that issue. The professor added also that teaching, particularly under-graduate teaching is not sufficiently valued in this context and that we need to work on the acculturation of new administrators.

A senator asked why shared governance has so often not been used before decisions were made. Are there things which serve to identify why shared governance did not work in those situations? A professor indicated that there have been numerous cases where there was no faculty search committee or where the committee's decision was overturned, and he asked if the president would commit to the use of standard faculty search committees and be guided by their advice. Also, interim appointments often last for years; and so the selection should be done by a search committee with faculty. The president replied that the use of searches with full faculty participation is important and that the committees' recommendation should govern the appointment process. He added that interim appointments should be avoided when possible and should be for a short period of time when used.

A senator asked if the president has plans to have a partnership with faculty to find out why the state gives such few funds. The president said that the proportion of funds, although not the dollars themselves, has gone down. He tries to spread the message that UNH is the single biggest driver of the economy in the state. The senate vice chair said that the Faculty Senate has been working on the draft of a document which was forwarded to the president. The senate vice chair asked the president if he would be interested in developing a joint document on shared governance. The president replied in the affirmative and added that we should sit down together to review that document and should also look at what the administrators have written on shared governance and then come up with a common document.

III. Remarks by and questions to the chair – The senate chair invited faculty to suggest nominations for interim vice provost. The senate chair said that the provost has agreed that the Agenda Committee could meet with the candidates for senior administrative positions of deans and above, in the future as a general practice. Two representative nominated by the Faculty Senate will join the selection committee for university professors and presidential chairs. Two university professorships and two presidential chairs will be chosen. The criteria for university professors are as follows: faculty, who have demonstrated the highest levels of excellence in teaching, scholarship (including the creative arts), and service over an extended period of tenure at the University of New Hampshire, are expected to have attained international stature in their discipline because of their significant contributions to the advancement of knowledge or aesthetic understandings, and will have received other widely recognized honors such as international prizes, fellowships, or appointments. The university professorships will entail \$20,000 per year from the UNH Foundation for the duration of the stay at UNH. The presidential chairs criteria are as follows: full professors who have demonstrated excellence in teaching, scholarship (including the creative arts), and service, and are highly regarded for having made substantial contributions to the knowledge or aesthetic understanding of their respective disciplines. The presidential chairs will entail \$15,000 per year from the President's Excellence Fund for ten years, renewable.

IV. Minutes – The minutes of the last senate meeting were unanimously approved, with a change to the first sentence in item II to read: “The senate chair said that, when there is a communication of possible importance about a previous senate minutes, the senate chair in consultation with the Agenda Committee would decide whether or not the matter was of

sufficient import to be brought to the senate and, if so, then the issue could be dealt with as a separate item in the new senate meeting.”

V. Motion on baseline climate survey – UNH has applied for a National Science Foundation grant under the NSF ADVANCE program for the advancement of women and underrepresented minorities in the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) disciplines. This initiative was started and has been driven by faculty. The grant would be used to develop policies, procedures, and programs to support the development of an improved climate of inclusion at UNH. In preparation for this initiative and to enable future assessment of its progress, we are conducting a survey to learn about UNH faculty members’ perceptions of their workplace: what they like, what they dislike, and what is important to their daily life, satisfaction, and productivity. Understanding these issues is the initial step toward improving the UNH workplace for all faculty. The survey would be sent to faculty at all levels. **Karen Graham proposed and Marco Dorfsman seconded a motion that the Faculty Senate supports the Workplace Perception Survey. The motion passed unanimously.**

VI. Motion to retable – **David Richman moved and Professor Bachrach seconded that the motion, proposed in item V of the 2/11/08 senate meeting and subsequently retabled, be tabled today until the next senate meeting. The motion to retable passed unanimously.**

VII. Adjournment – Today’s meeting was adjourned.