

UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
2007-08 FACULTY SENATE

APRIL 7, 2008

MINUTES SUMMARY

I. Roll – The following senators were absent: Barcelona, Calculator, Charpentier, Dowd, Greenberg, Hamlin, Huang, Kaen, Lane, Park, and Walsh. Excused were Afolayan, Bachrach, Berndtson, Dorfsman, Echt, Hartter, Kistler, and Sample. Guests were Mark Rubinstein, David Cross, and Anne Lawing.

II. Campus Security – Vice President Mark Rubinstein introduced David Cross who is the director of the Counseling Center and Anne Lawing who is the senior assistant vice president for Student and Academic Services. Anne Lawing said that the administration has developed various initiatives designed to provide better monitoring and services which hopefully can prevent instances of disruptive behavior on campus. Around the country, in the past three or four years, many universities have developed behavioral intervention teams. UNH has an interdisciplinary team of professionals who get together either weekly or every other week to review information about students who may be in trouble and who have come to the team's attention through faculty, staff or student referral. This provides an opportunity to consider students with troubling patterns of behavior in order to intervene, hopefully at an early stage, to prevent incidents from happening. The people on this team are Anne Lawing, David Cross, Scott Chesney, Judy Spiller, Kathleen Grace Bishop, and Deputy Chief Paul Dean. Anne Lawing said that she has met with a number of students to talk about what's going on, to introduce the "care team" concept, and to find out what kinds of services the students may need. She added that what is done now, as compared with the past, is to mandate for students, if we believe that they should be assessed by our counseling center, an assessment of between two and four counseling sessions where the student is given an opportunity to meet with a psychologist. The university will continue with the care team and provide training. A nationally-known anger management expert is going to come to campus at the end of May. He has been working with schools and businesses for years and analyzing behavioral assessments of people who are angry or disruptive in a variety of settings.

So far, the care team has worked with about a dozen students in the month it has been operating. The team can serve various types of students including those who may not have caused serious problems but who seem to be under increasing stress. In addition, a student with any mental illness or disability can register with the student disability services office. Anne Lawing said that faculty, who identify troubled students in class, may contact department chairs, associate deans or any member of the care team for follow-up; and then that group will get back to the concerned faculty member. She said that internet or email harassment concerns can also be brought to the care team and that there are a variety of ways that the team can consult and evaluate the emails and decide what the best course of action is.

David Cross said that he provides a program which is about an hour in length, on identifying students at risk for suicide and homicide, looking at signs and symptoms to be

aware of and at the resources on campus which are available 24 hours a day and 7 days a week throughout the whole year. A senator said that, considering confidentiality issues and a possibility of violence or other disruption, at what point does the university let other faculty members know? Anne Lawing replied that FERPA is apparently being expanded to allow us to communicate more readily with one another and with parents or other significant others if there are issues around health or safety. She said that we may be given more leeway if we need information in order to perform our jobs, in order to teach in the classroom or carry out our responsibilities. Faculty should tell a member of the care team and let them evaluate the situation and develop an action plan. The health and safety exceptions in FERPA give us the ability to communicate with anyone whom we perceive to have a legitimate interest in knowing the information. The university must report to the community if an incident represents an ongoing, serious and continuing threat to the community. She said that, if we think that there is going to be a risk to anyone in our community, we will do an intervention.

Last semester the university acquired a service which can send text messages to anyone who is a subscriber of the service; and for Clery Act notifications, that is one way to get information out about an issue on campus. Currently only about 6000 of the 22,000 people who could subscribe to this service have done so. A senator asked whether there is some way of differentiating the announcements that are of high importance from those about run-of-the mill disruptive behavior. The Clery Act requires notification of certain crimes, but “alert fatigue” could develop. A senator said that the only twenty four-hour number is 911 but that there are people who are reluctant to call 911 and engage the police in something that may be a mental health issue. If a matter is urgent, 911 is the number to call. The cards distributed earlier give a couple of additional numbers including the counseling center, for people who do not want to use 911. The goal of the care team is to identify a situation as it is starting to emerge and to reach out to students and assist them before they reach a crisis point. A senator asked what similar support system exists for faculty. Mark Rubinstein replied that the university has the Employee Assistance Program. David Cross added that the Counseling Center can serve both faculty and students and is happy to consult with faculty and staff and do some strategizing for interventions, using the Employee Assistance Program’s basic structure.

III. Remarks by and questions to the chair – The senate chair said that, after the contract was negotiated, he sent an email to the senate committee chairs asking them to convene the committees, in order to rank the charges by importance and then figure out which might be done by the end of the semester. So please look over your charges and take a look at what can be done. In addition, every ten years, the university is accredited by NEASC; and every five years, during the fifth year of the ten year cycle, the university writes a report. A university committee is now in the middle of writing that report for distribution to NEASC this summer. That report should go to the senate committees on academic affairs, research and public service, and student affairs for their review on the twenty eighth of April, so that they can give recommendations to the senate. Then in the final senate meeting the senate can look at the report, discuss it, and then vote on whether to ratify it. Also, the university system is going to implement a background check policy this summer. Documents have been passed to the senate’s Academic Affairs and

Professional Standards Committees, for them to look over these documents and generate a response to our administrators including Vice President Dick Cannon. Depending on what the committees find, the senate may or may not have a discussion about these background checks.

The initial background-check documents from the university system last fall indicated that, any time faculty are hired or promoted, there would be background checks, of a type depending on what security level that person would have. This policy would include the hiring of graduate assistants and is about whether or not there was due diligence to ascertain if the person has reasonable potential for harm to a third party. A senator suggested that the university would then open itself to lawsuits, from people who were not hired because they had committed a minor infraction many years ago. There would be lots of gray areas which would raise really difficult decisions. A senator asked if this matter might be a faculty union issue, especial regarding faculty promotion, as the new policy might be considered a change of established working conditions. The senate chair said that he has indicated to administrators that they should be sure to bring the AAUP on board to discuss this but that he does not know if the administration has actually made contact. A professor said that, before the senate takes this on, it would be good to clarify the situation regarding whose responsibility this falls under, because if this is about working conditions that concern the bargaining unit, then the senate should not pick this up. However, hiring graduate students is clearly not an AAUP issue. The senate chair asked Curt Givan, who is a member of the AAUP executive committee, to let him know what the AAUP's position is on this matter; and the senate chair will send Curt the pertinent documents.

The senators discussed whether the background checks would be used for nearly all faculty upon promotion or not and added that the cost could be substantial. The senate chair said that the two senate committees will review the documents, gather information, and decide what they think the most effective response would be. A senator said that safety-sensitive positions would trigger deeper screening and perhaps drug testing, but what is a safety-sensitive position? Another senator expressed concern that, because of past racism, minorities may be more likely to have criminal records and thus be unfairly penalized as a result of background checks.

The senate chair said that recently the Central Budget Committee looked at the financial forecast for the university and that, for FY09, UNH is now projecting about a 1.5 percent deficit, which is about four or five million dollars. The senate chair said that the president is considering forming a task force or committee with lots of senate involvement, in order to look at this issue and see what can be done to mitigate the problem. The senate chair and vice chair have also had discussions with the president regarding a retreat to discuss shared governance. The Agenda Committee thought that it would be good to have a couple of senators join in that discussion to make it a little broader. So any senator, who is interested in joining a retreat with some principle administrators, the Agenda Committee and perhaps a few other individuals to talk about shared governance, could send the senate chair an email expressing that interest. If there are many who want to join in, the Agenda Committee would select one or two to

participate. A senator stated that the retreat invitees should include the chair of each senate standing committee.

IV. Minutes – The minutes of the last senate meeting were approved, with a change in the last sentence of item III to state that the “presidential chairs will entail \$15,000 per year from the President’s Excellence Fund for ten years, renewable” and with a change in the first sentence of item II to indicate that President Huddleston is a “former president of an academic or university senate”.

V. Motion regarding work-to-rule – David Richman moved and another senator seconded the following motion.

Pending ratification of the contract between the UNH chapter of AAUP and the University System of New Hampshire, the Faculty Senate will act in a timely manner upon all business that comes before it. We will regularly invite the president, the provost, and other administrators to address the full senate and its committees; and we will consider all requests from administrators, students, and staff to address the Faculty Senate and its committees. Should the contract not be ratified, we will reconsider this matter.

The motion presenter said that essentially the senate would be going back to business as usual when faculty are not on work to rule. After discussion and acceptance of a friendly amendment, the motion was changed to the following.

Upon ratification of the contract between the UNH chapter of AAUP and the University System of New Hampshire, the Faculty Senate will act in a timely manner upon all business that comes before it. We will regularly invite the president, the provost, and other administrators to address the full senate and its committees; and we will consider all requests from administrators, students, and staff to address the Faculty Senate and its committees.

A senator said that historically, as soon as the system office prints up the new contract, it is made available on reserve in the library so that faculty, before they vote, can review what they will be voting on. He added that he has not yet heard that the document has finally been delivered and that he hopes it will be this week and that the voting will be done by the twenty-first of this month. **The motion introduced by David Richman passed unanimously.**

VI. Tabled motion on shared governance – **On behalf of the Agenda Committee, David Richman moved that the shared governance motion, which was originally proposed in the 2/11/08 Faculty Senate and subsequently tabled a number of times, be withdrawn. The motion to withdraw was approved.**

VII. Document on shared governance – The Agenda Committee had presented to the senate on 2/25/08 a draft of a document on shared governance and had revised the draft, after discussion with the senate on that date and on 3/10/08. During the retreat on shared

governance, the plan is to consider this document and also some writings by administrators. The retreat would have a facilitator; and the group would spend the day hammering through the issues raised by the different documents, with the goal of ending up with a single concrete document that the administration would have agreed to and that would come back to the senate in the fall for ratification. Some senators indicated that the situation has recently changed and that the senate's document may therefore need modification. Other senators said that the concerns in the document go back for years and need to be addressed even though a new faculty contract has been negotiated.

A senator said that, at the senate meeting on 3/24/08, the president alluded to decisions that would not need the Faculty Senate, with respect to the auxiliaries; but the senator said that one of several issues of shared governance with the auxiliaries has to do with getting rid of the vans used by faculty for academic field trips. The senator added that another such issue that he was very concerned about, after having been on the graduate council for a number of terms, is that the council had worked really hard to hammer out a deal so that there would be graduate student housing for married couples on this campus; but the auxiliary said that did not fit their finances and refused to do it that way. Such decisions do impact the quality of the academic programs, and so the senator said that faculty and the administration need to remind the auxiliaries that they also need to support the academic mission. A senator added that another issue where the administration made financial decisions which had huge effects on academic programs was the change in funding of the study abroad programs.

The senate chair suggested that the shared governance document should give particular examples where shared governance has worked and has not worked, so that everybody at the retreat has concrete examples and so that the various groups could look through their own histories and develop data so that we can compare the views on something that did not work and thus figure out the problem. He added that perhaps the university could form a committee to discuss the value of having an arrangement within RCM, where an auxiliary might not make a profit, if the service that auxiliary is providing is worth supplementing.

In response to a question, the senate chair said that a good example of where shared governance worked well was the American Sign Language issue. A task force was put together; a report was developed; the senate's Academic Affairs Committee got the report and talked with the departments; and the matter was worked out as a viable compromise. He said that this enhanced the ASL program a great deal, and departments were able to choose whether or not they wanted to participate in ASL as a foreign language and under what conditions. A senator said that another example of positive shared governance is the current Liberal Arts dean search. Faculty were not happy with the initial composition of the chairs of that committee, and the composition of the chairs was changed. In addition, the senate's Agenda Committee had a chance to talk to all of the candidates. He added that now, when the search committee makes its recommendations, if those recommendations are accepted, then shared governance will have worked. Shared governance should be an automatic thing and the way the university does its business.

Another senator said that the Discovery Program is an example of an exercise in shared governance, which will involve the allocation of resources and the potential implementation of a program that was initiated by the faculty and where decisions are supposed to be made by the faculty. There are some issues in that regard which are going to end up on the senate's agenda soon; and some concerns are being expressed by members of the faculty, who have been very much involved in that process. The senate chair said that the Discovery Program will be considered by senate committees this fall; and then the matter will be brought to the senate. Also on the senate's docket next year will be considering the academic plan, which should address the central mission of the university.

VIII. Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned.