

UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
2007-08 FACULTY SENATE

APRIL 21, 2008

MINUTES SUMMARY

I. Roll – The following senators were absent: Barcelona, Calculator, Chandler, Dowd, Hamlin, Kaen, Lane, Park and Walsh. Excused were Afolayan, Charpentier, Graham, Howey, Lieber, Nimmo, Richman and Senier. The provost was a guest.

II. Remarks by and questions to the provost – The provost said that he is pleased to have a faculty contract and is eager to move forward on many issues; and he added that faculty participation will be needed for many of those tasks. He said that the Academic Affairs Office is concerned about threatened state appropriations, flat or declining indirect cost returns, growing deficits in some academic and non-academic units, rapidly rising energy and health insurance costs, new faculty start-up expenses, the decline in New England high school graduates, and staff unionization efforts, as well as relationship and climate issues and the need to articulate the research mission and the integration of academics and research. Other projects are the COLSA reorganization, the Discovery Program implementation, review and renewal of the Academic Plan, merit and equity distributions, and faculty contract negotiations to start in February of 2009. Regarding the need to address cost and program factors in international education, the provost said that he would bring a report on that to the senate in the fall.

The Office of Academic Affairs will work on strategic planning, budget planning, governance issues, curriculum development, and institutional development. Regarding governance, the provost said that he speaks frequently with the senate chair and vice chair and reads the senate minutes. He is glad to see that the senate has produced a document on shared governance. He also has written on the subject; and a colleague wrote a monograph as well, which the provost will send to the senate chair and vice chair. Faculty and administration representatives will discuss these matters this summer, in order to agree on wording for core principles and processes. The provost's office will work via shared governance for a resolution of the tuition model for managed study abroad programs. The provost would like a campus-wide discussion on promotion and tenure standards. He plans to form a Strategic Planning and Alignment Committee, in order to connect institutional planning, budget planning, and resource allocation, as well as institutional effectiveness activities. He would like to extend and adapt the academic program review model to include the non-academic units. He will also work on a process for review and approval of interdisciplinary schools, including governance structures. The provost said that the university would like to improve faculty mentoring and enhance the retention of a diverse faculty

The provost is hoping for final review and action on the Discovery Program and its inquiry courses and capstone experiences during the coming academic year. His office plans to work on assessment of student learning outcomes and identification of valid measures to assess student learning. Institutional development will include leadership at UNH, the faculty mentoring program, the NEASC fifth year report, and the Carnegie

application for the “engaged campus” classification. A senator said that the Discovery Program was proposed seven years ago and that a primary concern is sufficient funding, especially for the inquiry courses. The provost replied that the university has allocated \$400,000 per year for three years to help with the initial offerings of inquiry courses. He added that, if there are funding challenges at the end of the start-up process, the university will decide at that time what steps to take.

Another senator asked if the current promotion and tenure standards are inadequate or old. He expressed concern that assessment is often driven by state mandate and yet the state gives little funding, and he suggested that this assessment might be considered an unfunded mandate. The provost said that one concern is that current promotion and tenure standards may not adequately cover scholarship in newer electronic media. Also, to what extent should patents and other forms of commercial intellectual property count in promotion and tenure, since such work provides value and advances knowledge? In addition, the evaluation of teaching effectiveness should not just rely on student evaluations. The provost said that some departments evaluate teaching effectiveness using measures in addition to the standard student forms, but most departments do not. He added that the topic of student learning assessment did not originate from the state. The NEASC report includes expectations for some method of assessment. Also, if other institutions which compete with UNH develop ways of assessment and UNH does not, UNH might lose new students. UNH should choose its methods of assessment before another entity tells the university how to do it. Assessment would consider how students have improved in quantitative and qualitative reasoning and in the ability to write, and the provost would like faculty to help decide on the most appropriate method of assessment. Some faculty asked that the university exert more selectivity in admitting students; and the provost expressed concern that, if the university admits fewer students, it might become less accessible to qualified New Hampshire residents and might not be able to function financially.

III. Remarks by and questions to the chair – The senate chair said that a five-year interim report for NEASC will be sent to the chairs of the senate’s Academic Affairs Committee, Student Affairs Committee, and the Research and Public Service Committee. Those committees are expected to bring recommendations to the senate on 5/5/08. Victor Benassi will also be present then, to answer questions on the report. The senate chair said that total giving to UNH for fiscal year 2008 is up fifty percent from the same time in the previous year and that the number of donors is up 3.2 percent. Also, applications for first-year admission have passed 16,200. However, a deficit of five to seven million dollars is projected for the next fiscal year. The senate chair added that the senate office has forwarded to the senators a message about the “students for concealed carry on campus” protest, which may take the form of wearing empty holsters to campus, in order to draw attention to a belief that, if ostensibly law-abiding students and others could carry appropriately-permitted concealed weapons on campus, this would somehow improve safety.

IV. Minutes – The minutes of the last senate meeting were approved, unanimously except for one abstention.

V. University calendars – The administration has presented for approval five years of university calendars, covering academic years 2009/10 through 2013/14. Members of the Agenda Committee have reviewed the calendars, to see if they comply with the senate’s calendar guidelines. The review found only minimal deviations, which appeared to be necessary due to a lack of available days in some semesters. Therefore in some cases the reading days were slightly shortened. **On behalf of the Agenda Committee, Ruth Sample moved that the senate approve the 2009/10 through 2013/14 university calendars.** She suggested that, since there are a different number of days in the spring and the fall semesters, a senate committee could review that issue at a later time. Many people would like to end the fall semester by December 22, but there are also concerns about starting school before Labor Day. Sometimes the deadline for grade submission has been after Christmas. Some senators would like to have a winter term of three weeks or a little more. Having a long winter break implies a shorter summer vacation, and so students miss out on internships and certain jobs. A professor suggested approving only the first calendar year, but another faculty member said that the university must have dates in place a long time in advance. A senator said that in some years faculty have to decide to teach or cancel classes for the Friday after Thanksgiving and that those who teach on Friday are put in this awkward position more often. A senate committee could be charged with reviewing these matters next year; and the senate chair will send a note to Mark Rubinstein about this intention. Also, the senate chair will ask him if there are any degrees of freedom regarding later changes for the fourth and fifth years. **The senate passed the motion to approve the five calendars, with all ayes except for five abstentions.**

VI. Remarks by and questions to the president – The president expressed interest in the possibility of UNH having a winter session. The chair of the senate’s Finance and Administration Committee asked whom he should contact to discuss the committee’s charge to enhance shared governance regarding the distribution of capital campaign funds. President Huddleston replied that the president of the UNH Foundation is Peggy Sullivan and that building the infrastructure for the foundation is an important first step. The Alumni Association may have infrastructure redevelopment also. The provost just described a long list of challenges for UNH, and the need for funding is a common chord. Therefore the capital campaign and other types of fund raising should be a high priority, in order to increase both short-term and long-term funding. Regarding media coverage, the president has met with WMUR and various newspaper editorial boards, to encourage them to publish the university’s news releases. The president said that UNH gets some news coverage but is an under-appreciated asset to the state. Some announcements and displays can be done only on a paid basis. The university is also working on having another bus tour of the state, to encourage a better understanding of how the university helps the state.

A senator said that a lot of the character of the university is provided by its rural setting and open spaces. He is a member of the Land and Property Use Advisory Committee and said that the committee was recently asked to choose the best of several already-listed nearby sites for a huge building which would house the largest wind tunnel in North

America. He said that the committee should not be forced to choose “the least of those evils” and further encroach on the open spaces which are used in various important ways by the university. The president replied that he would look into that situation, and he said that the university has a strong campus master plan.

A professor said that the departments in James Hall must move out because the building will be renovated and that the smaller departments will lose dedicated classrooms. If those departments must use distant classrooms, there will be a loss of solidarity with the students; and this would be a permanent problem. The president said that he would inquire about that. Classroom space is tight. The senate vice chair suggested that the issue of dedicated classrooms could be dealt with as a shared governance matter. The senate then had a brief discussion on how to deal with increased energy costs and the pros and cons of special fees.

VII. Slate for the 2008/09 Agenda Committee – The senate vice chair said that, in May of each year, the outgoing senate chair conducts an election by the senate members for the next year’s Agenda Committee members, for one-year terms. The 2007/08 Agenda Committee will present the following slate for next year’s Agenda Committee: Marco Dorfsman as chair, Paula Salvio as vice chair, and Karen Graham, David Richman, Barbara White and one other person as members at large. Bill Stine will be an ex-officio member as past chair. Biographical information for all the members of the slate will be sent to the senators soon on email. Additional candidates may be nominated from the floor, if they have agreed to serve if elected.

VIII. Participation in the shared governance retreat – The senate vice chair said that shared governance is an important issue for the senate and that the president has proposed a retreat this summer, to confirm a joint understanding of the shared governance process. The senate will provide about ten retreat participants, which could consist of some members of the Agenda Committee, the chairs of the Academic Affairs Committee, the Finance and Administration Committee, and the Research and Public Service Committee, and some other senators. Any senators who have a strong interest in participating in this effort should contact the senate chair.

IX. Blue Ribbon Panel and discussion of research at UNH – Kevin Gardner listed the members of the Blue Ribbon Panel’s working group. The process for engaging faculty across the university includes the representative constitution of the working group and the panel, engaging faculty through upcoming college meetings and through faculty-wide email, reports to the Faculty Senate by members and chairs of the panel, a draft report which is scheduled to be completed this summer, and then additional college-based meetings in the fall, to provide input on the draft report. The panel and the working group will conduct a mission-driven exercise addressing the charge from the president, will create a set of recommendations with a ten-year perspective, and will consider the historical information available, including the final report of the Commission on Graduate Education submitted to Provost Walter Eggers in October of 1992, the preliminary report of the Commission on Research and Graduate Education from December 18, 1989, and a report from Vice President Don Sundberg entitled “Research

Excellence: Goal Four of the Academic Strategic Plan – Overview and Cross-Cutting Issues” from March 28, 2002. President Huddleston, in his letter dated December 12, 2007, announced the formation of the Blue Ribbon Panel and its charge to engage the university community to address three key questions: (1) What does UNH need to do now to ensure the vitality of research, scholarship, and creative activity for the next ten years? (2) What is the right mission and organizational structure for the Office of Research and, by extension, the right qualifications for a vice president for research? (3) How do we ensure that research activities are integrally connected to and supportive of our broader academic mission? One of the issues will be the balance between scientific research and liberal arts functions.

X. New business – The senate vice chair said that senate members participated in a visioning seminar last summer and that he would like to hold such a seminar for the senators this summer as well, in order to develop agenda priorities.

XI. Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned.