

UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
2008-09 FACULTY SENATE

NOVEMBER 3, 2008

MINUTES SUMMARY

I. Roll – The following senators were absent: Bachrach, Ciccone, Dowd, Gross, Powell and Walsh. Excused were Boylan, Graham, Nimmo, Swartz and Tobin. Lisa MacFarlane, Kevin Linton, and Thomas Pistole were guests.

II. Remarks by and questions to the vice provost – Lisa MacFarlane said that last Monday she discussed with the Agenda Committee the issues her office is working on, which relate to the Faculty Senate. Regarding the study abroad tuition model, a summit meeting has been held which included the study abroad program directors and others; and a working group has started its review. The vice provost indicated that the working group will consider which groups are working well with the new tuition model and which may need modification of the model. The working group will produce a recommendation which will go to the study abroad program directors and the senate's Academic Affairs Committee, which will send its own recommendation to the Faculty Senate. A decision needs to be made soon enough so that the study abroad programs can advertise for students to join their programs for next year.

The vice provost said that the Agenda Committee asked for a quick resolution of the field trip guidelines issue and that her office would do that. She has gathered information and talked with the chair of the senate's Student Affairs Committee. The vice provost said that a similar shared governance process will be done regarding the field trip guidelines policy and that she will consult the affected faculty and try to come up with a more flexible policy that still covers the university legally. The administration will look at the insurance policies to see what kind of riders might be available. A senator pointed out that the guidelines now indicate that only ten people are allowed in the fifteen person vans.

The vice provost's office will work with the senate's Student Affairs Committee to look at student outcomes assessment. A pilot project for the College Learning Assessment was approved by the senate's Agenda Committee, and that project will take most of the year. Also, the provost's office will do a review to see what information can be obtained through current assessment methods, what gaps may need to be filled, and what the easiest way to do that would be. Good assessment is valuable in itself and is also needed because of federal, NEASC and USNH requests. UNH should be proactive in this area, in order to show that the university is developing appropriate assessment and does not need outside mandates. A professor asked if outcomes assessment would include such methods as questionnaires to former students' employers. The vice provost replied that there are many ways to gather the data and that we need to ask the right questions and figure this out, while avoiding duplication of effort.

Also the vice provost said that the administration has prepared a draft on the definitions of and guidelines for approval of schools, and she has recently sent the document to the

senate for review. A senator expressed concern that COLSA is now without a governance system including a current set of bylaws, which were supposed to have been done last year. A committee has just begun work on a proposal for the bylaws. A working group has also been formed to review the issue of bringing Franklin Pierce Law School into UNH. The president's office is organizing a search committee to do a national search for a new provost, and there will be considerable faculty input in this search.

III. Remarks by and questions to the chair – Although the original plan for today's senate meeting was to discuss the report of the Blue Ribbon Panel for Research, that discussion has been moved to a subsequent senate meeting, because the report differed from the previous draft available to faculty. UNH's mission is to provide a good undergraduate education and to do research, and the university must do both within its tight budget. How best to accomplish that is a value judgment which needs discussion, since reallocation to either one could hurt the other. Senators are asked to review and give input on the report of the Blue Ribbon Panel for Research. The Faculty Senate will review the document, after receiving a recommendation from the senate's Research and Public Service Committee.

The senate past chair attended a meeting of the Central Budget Committee and heard a report that the projection for the fiscal year 2009 undergraduate net tuition looks good. Although the entering class of students is smaller, the financial aid is reduced. However, the budget for later years looks difficult. A Service Unit Advisory Board was proposed to oversee the functions of the operations and maintenance sections of the university. The Central Budget Committee passed a recommendation to the president, for a review of responsibility center management this spring. There is a proposal to do away with the hold-harmless formulas and replace them with subventions for various colleges. The hold-harmless formulas were set up when RCM first started and were intended to smooth out the beginnings of RCM and perhaps gradually be removed later. These formulas were calculated as of 7/1/01 and resulted from a difference between the previous budget of each unit and what that budget would have been under the initial RCM allocation formulas. The hold-harmless formulas result in a redistribution of funds among the academic units, relative to that determined by the RCM model. Currently the College of Liberal Arts and the Whittemore School of Business both have negative hold-harmless formulas and provide money for other colleges, relative to that suggested by the RCM allocation formulas. The subventions might be removed from non-academic units within a four-year period. The change to subventions for non-academic units might also include creation of a central fund administered by the president's office.

Faculty expressed concern that the auxiliary units serve the academic units. For example, the rents for graduate student housing have risen substantially, and faculty are concerned that pricing graduate students out of housing would have consequences for academic programs. The CBC has nineteen members from across the campus, including a graduate student and an undergraduate student representative. The university has asked developers to provide information about possible future graduate student housing in Leewood Orchards. A former senate chair said that he has questions about the CBC's decision-

making process, which may be partly addressed by the use of Service Advisory Boards or similar groups. A senator said that a decision on the hold-harmless formulas and the subventions should be made before a decision on the Blue Ribbon Panel for Research's report. The senate chair suggested inviting David Proulx and/or Dick Cannon to discuss budgetary matters with the Faculty Senate.

The chair of the senate's Student Affairs Committee asked for input from faculty on the paperless advising issue, which will be brought to the senate in this academic year. The senate chair said that the Faculty Senate will host a potluck dinner for the Student Senate at 5:30 p.m., right after today's Faculty Senate meeting; and he asked the faculty senators to bring potluck dishes to that dinner in room 18 of the Memorial Union Building.

IV. Minutes – The minutes of the last senate meeting were approved unanimously.

V. Discovery Program – The chair of the senate's Academic Affairs Committee said that the committee is reviewing the Discovery Program proposal. Today the committee is reporting its work only on the disciplinary breadth and the capstone components. The committee reported on the inquiry component at the previous senate meeting and will report on the attribute requirements at the next senate meeting. Contingent upon the following conditions, the Academic Affairs Committee recommends passage of the Discovery Program's disciplinary breadth component, requiring students to take eight courses distributed among distinct disciplinary areas. The conditions are as follows.

(1) Students are required to take disciplinary breadth courses in each of the following eight areas: biological science, physical science, fine and performing arts, humanities, historical perspectives, world cultures, social science, and "environment, technology and society".

(2) Students must take at least one laboratory science course in either biological science or physical science.

(3) Disciplinary breadth courses can be offered at the 400, 500, and 600 levels.

(4) Academic departments can decide whether the disciplinary breadth courses that they offer may double count for major as well as disciplinary breadth credits.

(5) Academic departments can decide whether inquiry 444 and inquiry attribute courses may double count for disciplinary breadth courses.

(6) Most disciplinary breadth courses should not have prerequisites, but academic departments may propose courses with a prerequisite when appropriate.

(7) The university registrar can devise a system for monitoring students' progress in meeting disciplinary breadth requirements.

(8) An approval process ensuring that all disciplinary breadth courses are proposed by the department, reviewed by the college or school dean's office and confirmed by the Discovery Committee. Standards for approval of courses are:

- a. Disciplinary breadth courses introduce students to the primary questions, methods and perspectives of the field or discipline.
- b. Disciplinary breadth courses encourage students to understand the connections among different disciplines or fields of study.

(9) Disciplinary breadth courses will undergo a review every five years according to the process and standards outlined in condition eight.

The descriptions of the eight category areas can be found on the Discovery Program website. The Academic Affairs Committee is still considering whether the environment, technology and society category should remain as currently formulated. With little or no modification, many of the current general education courses may be approved as fulfilling one of these eight categories. A senator asked why students would be required to take only one laboratory science course, and the response was that this is the current practice in the general education program and that there are not enough laboratory science courses for students to be required to take two. The senator countered that UNH should broadly educate its students for the world they will enter, and that getting laboratory experience and learning how hypotheses are tested and validated is important, and that she believes there are enough resources for that. The Academic Affairs Committee chair said that the committee evaluated the general education system and the proposed Discovery Program changes and modified or added to some of the proposed changes, in order to ensure that the Discovery Program would be a valuable educational experience. He added that the Faculty Senate will be able to approve the recommendations in whole or in part or not at all. The dialog component of the Discovery Program has been active since 2004. Every year a committee selects a theme for that dialog and tries to choose a topic connected to course content. Please give input about how the Discovery Program can make the dialog program better known and more fully utilized on campus.

The Academic Affairs Committee recommends passage of the Discovery Program's capstone requirement that fosters integrative learning from the academic major, contingent upon the following conditions.

(1) Departments designate capstones as appropriate to their respective disciplines, following the usual administrative procedures for their college or school.

(2) The capstone requirement may be satisfied through a course, a created work or product or performance, or some form of experiential learning. Departments may allow honors theses, mentored research projects, and other special student activities to substitute for designated department capstones.

- (3) Capstones must meet one or more of the following criteria.
- a. The capstone synthesizes and applies disciplinary knowledge and skills.
 - b. The capstone fosters reflection on undergraduate learning and experience.
 - c. The capstone demonstrates emerging professional competencies.
 - d. The capstone applies, analyzes, and/or interprets research or data or artistic expression.
 - e. The capstone explores areas of interest based on the integration of prior learning.
- (4) Departments are responsible for certifying that graduating seniors have met the capstone requirement.
- (5) The capstone should occur during the student's senior year.

The departments would decide how much work the capstone experience should entail. There has been some discussion on how essays or creative writing might be used to assess learning, but this would be under the control of the academic departments. If the university can show that it has developed comprehensive assessment methods, then outside mandates are much less likely. The Academic Affairs Committee has worded its recommendations and conditions so that the curriculum decisions would be in the hands of the departmental faculty. The capstone experience would often but not always be a credit-bearing course. A capstone experience that is not a credit-bearing course could be recorded in the student's file. The department would decide what experience would qualify, and the registrar could designate a way for tracking this on the student's transcript, in a way similar to that for the writing-intensive requirement.

VI. Report from the Student Affairs Committee – The chair of the Student Affairs Committee said that the committee has considered its charge to review the issue of student use of electronic devices in the classroom. The committee encourages faculty to establish in the course syllabi clear policies for whether or how electronic devices should be used. The committee proposes the following policy for the Student Handbook, on the use of cell phones, PDAs, pagers, digital music players, laptops, and other electronic devices during class. The rationale is that student use of the devices is often disruptive to students and instructors and that some students have used devices to enable them to engage in academic misconduct. Such lack of consideration and/or honesty can affect an entire class. Thus we have been asked to enact a policy authorizing instructors to take appropriate action when such a device is used in violation of an announced course policy.

The proposed policy is that students may not use cell phones, PDAs, pagers, digital music players (like IPODs), laptops and other electronic devices during class unless these are explicitly permitted by the course instructor. If use of any of these items is permitted by the course instructor, these items are not allowed to be used for non-specified class

activities. In the event of a violation of set policy, course instructors have the right to temporarily confiscate any of these electronic devices or to require the student to leave for the remainder of class. If a student has a learning disability that requires the use of one of these items, that student must inform the course instructor of this situation so that he or she can accommodate needed use. A student who feels the need to audio record a lecture must inform the instructor of this, so that she or he can accommodate learning needs. Also, if a student needs to leave a cell phone on for an emergency situation, that student should inform the course instructor and keep the phone in silent mode so as not to disrupt the course.

A senator asked if a student who claims special needs should have a certificate from the Access Office, so that the professor would know that the need truly exists. Some students may have learning needs which do not rise to the level of a certified handicap; but there is also the issue of the lecturer's intellectual property rights to consider, if a student is using a recorder. Another senator commented that, in some classes, there are confidential discussions which should not be recorded. A professor suggested that, in classrooms which provide computer screens, the faculty member may be able to cut off access to the internet. Faculty are requested to review the proposed policy and communicate any issues or concerns to the Student Affairs Committee. The senate will be asked to take formal action on this proposal.

VII. Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned.