

UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
2008-09 FACULTY SENATE

MARCH 9, 2009

MINUTES SUMMARY

I. Roll – The following senators were absent: Baldwin, Barrows, Beane, Boylan, Gross, and Mayer. Excused were Bachrach, Becker, Fraas, Pringle, Salvio, and Sample. Thomas Pistole was a guest.

II. Remarks by and questions to the chair – The senate chair said that the economic situation of the university seems to be in crisis and that the president has sent a letter on that subject. There will be a summit meeting of the Central Budget Committee, the president’s cabinet, the Agenda Committee, the Graduate Student Organization, the deans and others to discuss emergency ways to cut costs and increase net income. The senate chair asks Agenda Committee members, who may not be able to attend, to please arrange for another faculty senator as a proxy to attend this important meeting.

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

IV. Discovery Program – The chair of the senate’s Academic Affairs Committee took from the table the two motions on the Discovery Program interdisciplinary and identity attributes, which were presented at the last senate meeting. The first **motion** to be discussed today is **that the Faculty Senate endorses the Discovery Program’s perspectives-on-identity attribute**. The Academic Affairs Committee does not recommend passage of this motion. Brigitte Bailey moved and Barbara White seconded an amendment which would replace the motion concerning the perspectives on identity requirement in the Discovery Program with the following: “In satisfying the disciplinary breadth requirement, students will take one course (in any category) that also carries the perspectives-on-identity attribute. Courses carrying the perspectives-on-identity attribute must meet at least one of the following two criteria: (1) introduction of students to the analysis of such social identities as race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, class, and disability and to their implications for understanding social, economic, political, and cultural dynamics and (2) discussion of the implications of social identities for citizenship, for the nation, and/or for transnational or global communities.” The rationale of this amendment is that it is important that an exposure to analytical and/or historical perspectives on the formation of social identities and their implications for power or citizenship be integrated into the core curriculum of UNH. The perspectives-on-identity attribute supports the university’s role as a public university in its preparation of students for full participation, as professionals and citizens, in an increasingly diverse workplace and nation and in a networked world. Given the ways in which these identity formations have defined the modern world, students need an intellectual engagement with methods of analyzing such formations; UNH graduates, therefore, will have the tools to think critically about identity, including the social or historical formation of their own identities.

The changes in the amended motion were intended to address two of the AAC’s concerns. The first concern was that the addition of one more Discovery Program course would restrict students’ freedom to take elective courses, given other requirements especially in professional

colleges and schools. Combining the attribute with the disciplinary breadth requirement would formalize what would have been common practice for students in any case and does not add a course to the list of requirements for students in professional colleges and schools. The second concern was the erosion of the attribute's meaning due to an effort to increase flexibility in applying the attribute. By reducing the standards from four to two, this draft defines the attribute more specifically. The chair of the AAC declined to accept this amendment as a friendly amendment and said that the proposal does not alleviate the concerns of his committee. He added that the identity attribute should go back to a Discovery Program committee for consideration and study, to ensure that this attribute would not multiply requirements in an adverse way, to further define the attribute, and to add flexibility. That committee could then bring the matter back to the Faculty Senate for debate.

Barbara White proposed and Brigitte Bailey seconded an amendment to the Brigitte Bailey amendment, adding that the identity attribute could also be satisfied in an inquiry course or a 444 course, as well as a breadth course. The Discovery Program Advisory Committee thought the identity attribute was feasible, but the Academic Affairs Committee did not agree. Some senators said that inclusion of the identity attribute would add complications and reduce options, because students in majors which already have many required courses would have to choose a "double-dipping" course which could cover two requirements. The proposal to add to the suggested amendment, that the identity attribute could also be satisfied in an inquiry course or a 444 course, passed with twenty-three ayes, six nays, and six abstentions. A senator asked that the Discovery Program Advisory Committee do a feasibility study on the identity attribute. In a division-of-the-assembly vote, the modified amendment failed to pass, with fifteen ayes, seven abstentions, and fifteen nays plus the senate chair's tie-breaking nay, for a total of sixteen nays. **The Faculty Senate voted not to pass the motion that the Faculty Senate endorses the Discovery Program's perspectives-on-identity attribute, with fifteen ayes, seventeen nays, and five abstentions.**

The senate then discussed **the motion that the Faculty Senate endorses the Discovery Program's interdisciplinary understanding attribute.** The Academic Affairs Committee does not recommend passage of this motion. The committee's report says that the interdisciplinary attribute courses would have to meet four criteria: (1) that the course fosters the integration of disciplinary knowledge with interdisciplinary breadth, (2) that the course emphasizes the ways that disciplines connect or diverge, (3) that the course enhances understanding of a phenomenon, object, or subject of study by drawing upon two or more disciplines, and (4) that the course makes linkages to contemporary problems, issues, or students' lives. Also, the interdisciplinary understanding courses should be taught at the 600 or 700 level. The AAC chair said that it was not ruled out that this attribute might double count in a capstone course but that there are concerns about ambiguities, feasibility, and restriction of options. **The Faculty Senate voted not to pass the motion that the Faculty Senate endorses the Discovery Program's interdisciplinary understanding attribute, with three ayes, twenty-seven nays, and six abstentions.**

On behalf of the Agenda Committee, David Richman made a motion on Discovery Program implementation. The rationale is that, with the Faculty Senate's passage of the Discovery Program, it is necessary to call into being a committee, composed mostly of faculty, to review

and approve courses submitted for the Discovery Program. Since faculty are primarily responsible for all matters concerning curriculum and academic policy, the faculty members of this committee must be elected by faculty. The motion is guided by the 2002 report and recommendations of the General Education Study Committee; and the salient passage from that report reads as follows:

"We recommend the creation of a UNH Discovery Program Committee representing faculty from the various schools and colleges as well as appropriate administrative representatives to assure smooth implementation. The Committee would be composed of two representatives from the College of Liberal Arts and one from each of the other Schools and Colleges. Individual committee membership would be for a period of three years. There would be a sequencing of terms to minimize turnover in any given year. Faculty could serve more than one term. . . . The initial charge for this committee will be to evaluate all courses proposed by academic departments for acceptance into the UNH Discovery Program."

The motion is that "the Faculty Senate establishes the UNH Discovery Committee. This committee consists of two faculty members from COLA and one faculty member each from WSBE, CHHS, CEPS, COLSA, the Library, and UNHM. Committee members will serve for three-year terms. There is no limit to the number of consecutive terms any member may serve. After the first three-year term, subsequent terms will be staggered according to procedures the committee will establish. The Faculty Senate will administer the election. Faculty members will be elected by the units they are to represent. All tenure-track faculty who do not currently hold academic administrative positions are eligible to serve. Faculty members seeking election may be self-nominated or may be nominated by others. In addition to these elected faculty members, the committee will include a Faculty Senate representative (who need not be a senator but must be a faculty member) selected by the Faculty Senate. The committee will also include the following ex-officio members: the registrar, a representative from the provost's office, a representative from the Honors Program, and the Faculty Director of the Discovery Program. The committee's initial task is to establish and enact procedures, by which courses submitted for the Discovery Program are to be reviewed. The committee will take on such other discovery-related tasks as its members deem necessary. This committee will enjoy the administrative support of the Discovery Office, the administrative director, and the director's staff. The committee will establish and disseminate to the faculty procedures, by which potential Discovery courses are to be reviewed, and criteria upon which judgments will be based. Though this committee may wish to work closely with the Discovery Program Advisory Committee, with the current General Education Committee, with the Faculty Senate's Academic Affairs Committee, and with the Provost's office, the UNH Discovery Committee will have the final authority in reviewing and approving courses. The status quo from general education will remain in force unless and until changes are recommended by this newly constituted committee or the Faculty Senate."

In response to a question, Barbara White said that courses now in the General Education Program would have to be approved to qualify for Discovery Program requirements. General Education Committee and DPAC members might run for election to the new committee. The senate discussed whether, since the College of Liberal Arts is the largest of the schools and

colleges, it should have two representatives on the committee. **The original motion passed with twenty-seven ayes, two nays and seven abstentions.**

A motion was made, seconded and withdrawn after discussion, to nominate for membership in the UNH Discovery Committee all General Education Committee and DPAC members who are willing to run. Some senators said that the members of those committees could self nominate. The Agenda Committee will set up the procedures for the election of the members of the new committee. The senate chair said that the Agenda Committee may work with the associate deans to process the election but that the Faculty Senate office would tally the votes.

V. Blue Ribbon Panel on Research – The senate chair said that a ballot was distributed to the senators, so that they could indicate whether they feel that certain statements are a valid concern or commendation about the recommendations of the Blue Ribbon Panel on Research. Any of the statements which garner one third of the votes would be included in a sense-of-the-senate letter from the senate chair to the president, listing those concerns and commendations. Regarding two additional items which would need more extended discussion, the Agenda Committee has agreed to charge the senate’s Research and Public Service Committee with reviewing both the use of “earmarks” as a source of research funding and the role of research faculty at the university. In addition, the senate chair mentioned that feedback indicates that senators agree with the president’s plan to have an associate provost for research reporting to the provost, rather than a vice president for research. That search is in progress, and faculty are asked to participate in the discussions with candidates when they come to campus.

VI. Senate constitution and bylaws modification to reflect the Library Committee purview change – On 11/17/08, the Faculty Senate passed a motion that matters pertaining to information technology be added to the Library Committee’s purview and that a member of the Library Committee serve each year on the Steering Committee for Information Technology (SCIT). This change in purview requires a corresponding change in the Faculty Senate Constitution and Bylaws. **The Agenda Committee moved that item 6.b.6 of the Faculty Senate Constitution should be modified to state that “The Library Committee will concern itself with matters pertaining to the university’s library and information technology” and that item 5 of the Bylaws of the Faculty Senate should be modified to state that the corresponding administrators of the senate’s Library Committee are the Chief Information Officer and the Dean of the University Library. This motion passed unanimously with thirty-five ayes.**

VII. Student Use of Electronic Devices – On 1/26/09, the Faculty Senate passed a motion on student use of electronic devices, with the rationale that the use of electronic devices during class for non-class activities is disruptive to students and faculty and reduces the quality of the learning experience. The motion was that “Regarding the policy on cell phone/PDA/pager/digital music player/laptop/other electronic device use during class, students may not use cell phones, PDAs, pager, digital music players (like IPODS), laptops and other electronic devices during class unless designated 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-class activities. If students violate this policy, they will have a choice either to temporarily relinquish the device to the professor for the remainder of the class or to leave the classroom. If you, the student, have a learning disability that requires the use of one of these items, you must provide evidence from

the Office of Disability Services (ACCESS), to inform the course instructor of this situation so that he or she can accommodate your use. Also, if you need to leave a cell phone on for an emergency situation, you should inform the course instructor at the beginning of the class session as well as keep the phone on in a silent mode, so as not to disrupt the course.”

The Student Senate asked the Faculty Senate to reconsider this motion; and the Faculty Senate chair said that, although the Faculty Senate’s motion is in effect, the Faculty Senate’s Student Affairs Committee could decide whether it wishes to reconsider the motion. That committee met with a Student Senate representative and agreed to recommend that the Faculty Senate modify the wording. The senate chair said that Robert’s Rules state that an already-passed motion may not be revised but may be rescinded and a new motion crafted. **The Faculty Senate voted today to rescind the 1/26/09 motion on electronic devices, with a unanimous vote of thirty-four ayes.** On behalf of the Faculty Senate’s Student Affairs Committee, James Lewis moved that the Faculty Senate pass a revised motion in which the third sentence of the motion would be changed to say that “If students violate this policy, they will have a choice either to put the device beyond use for the remainder of the class or to leave the classroom.” The motion was tabled until the next meeting.

VIII. Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned.