I. Roll – The following senators were absent: Bell, Cariens, Carr, Carter, Pescosolido, Simos and Woodward. Excused were Chandran, Curran-Celentano, Potter, Sharp, and Weisman. Guests were Christina Caiazza, Jeff Jett and Jessica Knapp.

II. Remarks by and questions to the chair – The senate chair said that senators had been notified by email that an extra senate meeting would be held on April 25 instead of the senate committee meetings. On that day, the Professional Standards Committee will report to the senate on the dean’s censure issue, and some agenda items may be brought forward from May 2. The senate chair said that the senate’s Agenda Committee is presenting a slate for the 2011/12 Agenda Committee. The slate includes Lawrence Prelli as senate chair, Willem deVries as senate vice chair, Edward Hinson as past senate chair, and at-large Agenda Committee members Louise Buckley, Arthur Greenberg, Deborah Kinghorn and Dan Reid. Additional candidates may be nominated from the floor, but all nominees must have already agreed to serve if elected. Members of the UNH budget task force are working on suggestions for cost savings. The legislature will decide in June about the state budget. Some senators expressed sadness at the lack of resolution on the faculty contract and said that could affect the senate work in the future and the many upcoming initiatives which will require faculty input.

III. Minutes – The minutes of the previous Faculty Senate meeting were approved.

IV. Reports by the Research and Public Service Committee on the ethics training course, the academic plan, the role of research faculty, the Blue Ribbon Panel recommendations, and form B of the IP agreement – Charge 5 of the RPSC was to consider the requirement to sign Form B of the intellectual property participation agreement. Charge 7 was to communicate faculty concerns to the graduate dean and the graduate council, about the proposed mandatory ethics training course. Charge 6 was to address concerns about the consequences of the recommendations of the Blue Ribbon Panel on Research. Charge 3 was to review the research-related components of the Academic Plan. Charge 2 was to review the role of research faculty at UNH. The RPSC found that the Intellectual Property Participation Agreement (Form B) is redundant and confusing. It duplicates existing mandatory policy on intellectual property, and this duplication has been confusing to many of those who have been required to sign the agreement. The agreement has already been targeted for elimination by the Office for Research Partnerships and Commercialization. The Research & Public Service Committee unanimously recommended a motion to the Faculty Senate, saying that the requirement for faculty to sign the Intellectual Property Participation Agreement (Form B) should be eliminated. The Faculty Senate passed that motion with thirty-five ayes, no nays, and one abstention.

Regarding the mandatory ethics “course”, the RPSC gathered information from Dean Harry Richards. This training is not for credit and will not result in added cost to the student or the group funding the student. The training will be required only for new doctoral students. Current doctoral students will not be required to take the training. Much of the training material will be available through on-line modules, although the training will entail two or three in-person meetings/workshops. The estimated time commitment to complete the training is fifteen to
sixteen hours. The training has already been approved by two faculty groups: the Graduate Council and the Responsible Conduct of Research and Scholarly Activity Committee, which is advisory to the Senior Vice Provost for Research and the Dean of the Graduate School. The plan is for this training to meet the National Science Foundation training requirement for participation in the grants that it funds. Current plans call for rolling out the training in fall of 2011. UNH has taken on a leadership role in this type of training, with two previous grants from the Office of Research Integrity. UNH is currently submitting a grant to NSF to provide training to graduate faculty to teach discipline-specific RCR courses. The University of Massachusetts at Amherst, the University of Vermont, Tufts University, the University of Hartford and others have agreed to partner with UNH to send people here for training. Based upon the information above, the unanimous consensus of the RPSC is that no further action by the Faculty Senate on this issue is warranted.

A senator asked why all doctoral students should be expected to do this training which is driven by NSF grant applications, when many humanities graduate students will never work on an NSF grant. The administration believes that all doctoral degree students should take training on ethics. The Graduate Council had indicated that the on-line part of the training course contains case studies and that those should include situations appropriate to the work of each college. Thus, the arts could be addressed as well as engineering and the sciences. A professor said that this is not a course in ethics but has been instituted so that UNH will be in compliance with government agency standards. Another faculty member objected that requiring such a course implies that there is a problem in this area which needs to be addressed at UNH, whereas there is no evidence of any such problem and the students already are well trained by their professors. He added that the training should not be mandatory, because many students will never participate in an NSF grant. He said that we should not swat a gnat with a bazooka. A senator said that she understands those reservations but said that the training includes protection for human subjects. Moreover, much of the training course was designed by UNH faculty, using funding from NSF grants for that purpose. A professor said that humanities grants were not considered as part of the model and that we should not view research as only the sciences and engineering. A senator said that NSF grants go also to social sciences such as history, but not to the arts. Could we say that this training course is available but not mandatory for all entering doctoral students? Perhaps a motion could be presented to that effect.

The RPSC chair said that, in reviewing its charges this year (on the EOS Proposal, the Policy on Institutes, the Blue Ribbon Panel Report, research faculty, the Academic Plan, intellectual property rights, and the Faculty Annual Report), it was clear that UNH is seeking to become far more research intensive. This observation is corroborated by various reports and statements from administrators. A senator said that a major reason for the change is that research can bring income to the university. For the most part, the Faculty Senate has not weighed in on this significant change in direction for UNH. The tradeoff between research and teaching has not been adequately addressed by faculty. The UNH mission statement says: “The University of New Hampshire is distinguished by its commitment to high quality undergraduate instruction, select excellence in graduate education, relatively small size, a location in a beautiful and culturally rich part of the seacoast of New England and a strong sense of responsibility for this special place, a commitment to serving the public good, and our emergence over the past decade as a significant research institution.” What is our current ranking in funded research? The Blue
Ribbon Report said that: “Although lacking a medical school, the 2005 National Science Foundation (NSF) survey shows that UNH ranks 84th (out of 150) among public universities in research expenditures. It ranks 112th (out of 625) among all universities and 38th (out of 507) among all universities and colleges without a medical school.”

A UNH faculty poll showed that eighty percent of faculty members believe that UNH is a research university; yet nearly 60% express concern that UNH culture has not caught up with the growth in research. Conversely, one fifth of faculty members believe that sponsored research is a detriment to UNH’s teaching mission. The Blue Ribbon Report indicated that about 26% of the tenure-track faculty and 91% of the research faculty wrote proposals to external sponsors in FY 2008. Twenty faculty account for 65% of the award volume; and seven of these are research faculty, who account for about 40% of the total award volume. The Blue Ribbon Report proposed approaches that would encourage UNH faculty to do more research. However, the Lombardi Principles in the Blue Ribbon Report stated that “In our study of American research universities, we have learned some things about improving and changing universities. Some academics find these principles uncomfortable, for their view of academic life imagines a genteel lifestyle of academic contemplation, not a competitive marketplace for academic quality and productivity.” Proposed methods for increasing research productivity, from the Blue Ribbon Report, were (1) that measuring performance leads to improvement and that, in the absence of measurement, politics replaces performance as the institutional criteria, (2) that improvement in faculty performance depends on rewarding measurable high quality and productivity, and (3) increasing productivity with buyouts. The Blue Ribbon Report said that “Departments should design creative strategies for the distribution of course teaching requirements that would encourage research semesters or buyouts for faculty.” However, senators are concerned that this would mean that more students would be taught by less skilled instructors. The Blue Ribbon Report also said that, in order to create time for research, “Departments should identify and eliminate unnecessary departmental service responsibilities and streamline the departmental committee structure to support increased faculty research.” However, senators stated that this would lead to less shared governance.

The Blue Ribbon Report also said that “Centers and Institutes were associated with 74% of all externally funded research in 2006 and 78% in 2007 according to the Office of Sponsored Research (OSR). Ideally, Centers and Institutes are comprised of a mix of tenure track faculty, research faculty, and graduate students and are closely aligned with academic programs.” The Blue Ribbon Report also said that “Research faculty generated 47% of the total research expenditures over the last 5 years. (Tenure-track faculty generated 43% of research expenditures).” There are 71 research faculty currently at UNH, which is about one-tenth of the whole faculty. Some of the roles of research faculty are identical to tenure track faculty, while the roles of other research faculty are very different. They have no formal representation at the university level. There are no campus-wide policies for voting rights in colleges and departments and no clear policy on whether research faculty need to be affiliated with a college or department. Promotion of research faculty is problematic. The Faculty Senate has not weighed in on this issue. In summary, the RPSC recommends that the Faculty Senate should be involved in decisions about the move to increase research emphasis and should work with the administration to develop policy for research faculty, regarding voting rights and governance, promotion, and the relationship of research faculty with tenure-track faculty.
A senator said that last year the Faculty Senate gave a response to the Blue Ribbon Report about a number of items of concern and some of commendation and forwarded the response to the provost. The senate should circulate today’s RPSC report along with the report from last year. The senate vice chair said that it is essential for any important university group to include a member who represents and is appointed by the Faculty Senate. Another senator said that undergraduate education gets lip service from the administration but not priority funding. A past senate chair said that the Blue Ribbon Report was supposed to be brought to the Faculty Senate for review and consideration. However, there is a moving target because the interpretation of the report’s recommendations is different now from what it was two years ago. Also, it is harder for faculty to have time for both departmental work and research, since many faculty positions have not been filled. A balance is needed between teaching, service and research. More information on these matters and pertinent portions of Faculty Senate minutes can be accessed on the RPSC website at:

http://www.ece.unh.edu/personal/kentc/SenateRPSC/RPSC%20Report%20to%20Senate%20April%202011.pdf

The Faculty Senate chair said that today’s RPSC report gives us a direction for continued work in this area. This report is a good starting point and should lead to a further charge for next year’s RPSC, to monitor the push towards a research university and to include the humanities when considering research. The RPSC chair said that some of this year’s charges were very broad. The senate chair said that the Faculty Senate should be active about decisions regarding policy for research faculty, their voting rights, promotion, and governance. The Agenda Committee is assembling and charging a group to consider the standards (not the procedures) for promotion and tenure. Some faculty activities such as scholarly engagement have become prominent since the promotion and tenure standards were created. The senate chair asked that faculty contact him if they are interested in serving on that committee, which will be assembled and charged this semester and work during the upcoming academic year. A senator said that two members of the Blue Ribbon Panel refused to sign the Blue Ribbon Panel Report. The senator added that the report seems to emphasize “cost productivity”, i.e. getting outside grant funding rather than actually doing the research and creating knowledge. A professor said that most faculty must do teaching, service and research and that there is a false comparison of their work with that of research faculty. He added that research faculty should form their own constituent group and that the Faculty Senate is not responsible for that. A senator said that funding is diminishing both for research and for the rest of the university’s budget, and so where the remaining dollars are allocated is very important. The senator expressed concern about the administration spending money on multiple vice presidents, consultants, and sending people on trips for discussions which could be conducted on the phone. Are those issues on the table for funding cuts?

V. Report on the percent of the graduating class receiving honors – Marco Dorfsman made and Kent Chamberlin seconded a motion as follows.

The intention of honors is to award recognition to those students who achieve academic distinction over the duration of an undergraduate career. Students receiving honors awards at the University of New Hampshire should represent an approximate rate of 30% of the
graduating students. A calculation should be done before the freshman year for use when
the student graduates. To determine the Latin honors, a GPA cutoff will be calculated in
August of each academic year based upon three years of GPA data of graduating UNH
students. This data will be used to set a GPA minimum for each category for determining
Latin honors for senior students each year. All students who met the GPA requirement at
graduation receive Latin honors as follows: (1) summa cum laude--adjusted GPA
determined in August of each academic year that equals the GPA for the top 5% of the
previous three graduating classes of students at the college level; (2) magna cum laude--
adjusted GPA in August of each academic year for the top 15% of the previous three
graduating classes of students at the college level; and (3) cum laude--adjusted GPA in
August of each academic year for the top 30% of students at the college level. The GPA
calculation would be at the college level for enrolled seniors for the previous three years.
The GPA calculation refers to the criteria at the time of completion of all degree
requirements. GPA for 5%, 15%, and 30% of the graduating class for the last three years
determines the GPA for these categories for the next academic year. Once a GPA mark for
Latin honors has been established, all students who meet the GPA criteria receive Latin
honors independent of percentages. The percentages only help to determine the GPA criteria
each year.

The student observer said that Student Senate wants to be involved in this determination, because
this directly affects incoming students. Students are concerned because the GPA required for
Latin honors would be a moving target. Changing majors or colleges would affect Latin honors,
because in some majors or colleges it is much harder to get high grades. Some senators said that
their departments would prefer that the students receiving Latin honors at UNH be 25% or 20%
or lower, rather than 30% of the graduating class. Some administrators did not like the idea of
recalculating the GPA every year. The registrar reported that GPAs have been increasing
slightly but that, from year to year, the change would be small. Some senators wanted the
awards to be done according to a specific GPA requirement, with the understanding that the GPA
be revisited every four to five years. A professor suggested removing the following sentence
from the motion because of redundancy: “The GPA calculation would be at the college level for
enrolled seniors for the previous three years.” Senators said that passing a motion is important,
so that Latin honors at UNH will be meaningful and in line with other universities. A professor
said that having a moving target should be acceptable, because the requirement would be stated
in the student handbook prior to the student entering the university, the same as is done for other
changing requirements. A senator said that the Latin honors awards should be done by
department, since the average grade is much higher in some departments than in others.
Another senator said that, if a specific GPA were chosen (such as 3.85 for magna cum laude,
3.65 for summa cum laude, and 3.5 for cum laude), students in some colleges would have much
greater difficulty getting Latin honors than the students in colleges which give much higher
average grades. He said that the figure must be chosen at the college level. Another faculty
member asked why administrators should object to recalculating each year, since the algorithm is
easy. The motion was tabled until the next senate meeting.

VI. Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned.