Meeting called to order at 3:44 p.m. Monday, February 29, 2016

MINUTES SUMMARY

I. Roll – The following senators were absent: Erickson, Denis, Kun, Jamison, and Yalcinkaya. Innis was excused. P.T. Vasudevan was a guest.

II. Remarks by and questions to the interim provost – Interim provost Vasudevan informed the senate that the new provost, Nancy Targett, is visiting the campus today. She will be here officially on September 1.

A senator asked if the changes to RCM have been finalized, and Vasu responded that they have. In response to a question about allocation of tuition dollars, he responded that this depending on credit hour generation in each college, which would be weighted using the new Credit Hour Weighting (CHW) factors. Another senator asked how involved the deans were in developing the new RCM guidelines. Vasu said that there had been a presentation and a two or three hour discussion with all of the deans and the Business Services Center directors last fall. A senator asked if Earth Sciences and Ocean Engineering courses in the Marine School are counted the same as courses from the College of Engineering and Physical Sciences, there may be some questions. The provost noted that the rate for graduate and undergraduate courses are different, but added that the SMSOE can offer minors under the school’s policy which was approved by the faculty senate, meaning that they can offer undergraduate courses. Another senator asked when the next RCM review would take place. Vasu said that with the recent refresh from 2015, there are no plans to do another refresh in the foreseeable future unless something changes, as he cannot speak for the next provost.

A senator said that there appears to be an oddity in the guidelines for external reviews of programs, looking at the table of contents. He said that for the self-study portion, there seems to be no reference to scholarship or faculty other than in an appendix. The provost said he was unfamiliar with what the senator referred to and asked the senator to send along the passage in question so the provost could review it and respond.

The senate chair thanked the provost for his comments.

III. Remarks by and questions to the senate chair – The senate chair reminded the group about Peter Lake’s two upcoming presentations to the UNH community regarding Title IX/sexual violence and harassment scheduled for March 9 at 1:30 and 3 p.m.. She encouraged the senators to attend and asked them to encourage their colleagues to do likewise. All faculty have received an email with an RSVP link. A senator asked for a more detailed paragraph on the mandatory reporting issue so that she could share that information with her colleagues. The chair said she would try to provide that.
The chair then spoke about the upcoming senate election, noting that for the first time, the senate will be electing CCLEAR (Contract, Clinical, Lecturer, Alternative Security, and Research) faculty to the senate. She shared the numbers of eligible faculty in each department, noting that the two motions passed last spring, Senate Motion XIX-M12 and Motion XIX-M13, determined that departments with 1-15 eligible faculty will have one senator, 16-40 eligible faculty will have two senators, and 41 or more eligible faculty will have three senators. All department chairs have received emails from the senate admin with the names of eligible faculty according to senate records, based on information received from Human Resources, and have been asked to confirm or correct that information. All tenure-track faculty, and CCLEAR faculty with 75% or greater appointments will be eligible to vote.

A senator from Biological Sciences noted that his department is one of a very few departments with more than 40 senators, thus qualifying for a third senator, and he expressed that he felt this third representative was unnecessary. The chair said that the committee that prepared the motion last spring to include CCLEAR faculty in the senate worked very hard to determine appropriate distributions for senate representation, and that each department may choose to seat or not seat a senator. There was some discussion on this point, and another senator asserted that the senate has a policy regarding the number of faculty members to be represented by the number of senators. He said that departments cannot dictate voting procedure to the senate, but that each department may equally choose to send their representative(s). A senator asked what might happen should a faculty member be elected and want to serve but whose department does not want to send them. The chair replied that the changes to increase the number of senators have provide opportunities to serve, whether they are utilized or not. The senator from the Library expressed her department’s pleasure at having the chance to seat two senators instead of one.

A senator asked if the Qualtrics ballots used will be unique ballots or if they will provide an open URL. The senate admin replied that the intent is to provide unique ballots to each senator, who should have only one opportunity to cast their ballot.

The senate chair then said that in the past, some departments have made a decision about who will serve on the senate in faculty meetings and then the department chair has informed the senate admin regarding who the representative will be without the department faculty casting ballots. She said that departments are still welcome to communicate as they would like regarding who their senate representative will be, but that that decision must be reflected in the results of the Qualtrics ballots cast by department members.

It was noted that some departments will be electing two senators at a time, one to serve a two-year term and one to serve a one-year term, and asked how it will be determined who serves which term. The chair replied that the faculty member receiving the most votes will serve the two-year term. The one-year term is used to provide a rotation between the two senate seats.

Another senator asked if the senate meetings will be held in a different room to accommodate the larger group, and the chair replied that a larger room has been secured.
A senator pointed out the possibility that no CCLEAR faculty might be elected, and the chair responded that that is a possibility, depending entirely on the voting patterns of the departments. She also reminded the group that the CCLEAR visitors to the senate last year declared their willingness to live with this possibility in order to have the opportunity to serve at all. Deb said that it is important for all faculty to know that they must cast a Qualtrics ballot in order to select their departmental representative.

IV. Minutes – It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes of the last senate meeting, February 15, 2016. A correction was suggested in Item II and, thus adjusted, the minutes were unanimously approved with no abstentions.

Action Items:

V. Academic Affairs Committee motion on changes to the add/drop policy – Scott Smith, chair of the senate AAC, reported that UNH is nearly unique in its three-week add/drop period. He offered the committee’s report, in part:

> The Academic Affairs Committee was asked to review a possible change to the length of the period during which students may add classes, as well as to consider the possibility of conducting all add/drops using RAC numbers online—that is, without the consent of the instructor. This past year (AY15–16) we moved to online add/drops using the RAC number for the first week (that is, up until the second Tuesday at 4 pm), with paper add/drop forms thereafter for the second and third weeks [see Motion XVIII-M6 2-4-14]

> The changes proposed by the Registrar’s Office would eliminate both the third week of the add period and the need for paper add/drop forms during the second week. The Academic Affairs Committee is convinced that allowing students to add classes in the third week is a burden to both student and instructor alike and that moving to a two-week add period would be beneficial and bring the university in line with other institutions. While we see the logistical benefit of moving fully to online add/drops and dispensing with the paper add/drop procedure, the committee feels that it is important that students meet with instructors after a week of classes have passed (see addendum below). We also wish to note here that students who wish to add after two weeks can go through the petition process.

The AAC then moved the following:

1) That UNH move from a three-week add period to a two-week add period. The period that students may drop courses is to remain at 5 weeks.

2) That the current practice of online add/drops for the first week of classes continue, followed by a week during which students may add and drop only through the paper add/drop process.

The senate admin will divide these two items into separate motions for the vote in the next senate meeting.
A senator asked what the cost benefit might be of keeping the paper system, and Scott replied that he did not know. He said the benefit is more logistical than cost driven. Another senator asked what issues might arise for students studying abroad, and Scott replied that a manual system would need to be maintained for such students. Another senator noted the benefit of a longer add/drop period to students who are unsettled and unsure about what they should do. She said that she is not comfortable with conforming to the two-week standard used by other institutions just for the sake of conforming, and said she is hesitant to turn students away. Scott replied that it is problematic in many classes to add a student in the third week, and noted that there is a petition process for students who would need more than the two weeks to make decisions about their course schedule. Another senator said that the earlier deadline will set an overall expectation that may encourage students to make their decisions earlier. The senator from Music said that with their ensemble courses, it is easier to keep the add/drop period open for the three weeks in order to allow time for the formation of some of these ensembles.

Another senator said he supports the two-week period with paper add/drops to keep track of the changes. Scott said that his committee looked at using paper forms for the full two weeks, and that other options can be considered. A senator asked if there is a reason that an instructor’s signature is needed to drop a class; this seems unnecessary. Scott agreed, but did not know if there was a reason for that policy. Another senator suggested that it might be in order to alert faculty when a space opens up in their course so that they might be able to add another student.

A senator pointed out that when classes are cancelled due to low enrollments, late additions to the class may find that the class they think they’ve added may not even exist. Another senator said that it’s important for the registrar to let faculty know immediately regarding adds and drops, but that the registrar’s office has been reluctant to provide such immediate communication.

A senator asked if students have been involved in the process of deciding the length of the add/drop period. Scott said they have not. The student senate representative was asked his opinion on the matter. He replied that he can’t speak to the matter, although he would prefer to keep the three-week period. The senator asked if students could be more involved in the process, and Scott said he would see to that.

Scott said that there were 5,643 add/drops in the first week of the semester. He suggested that with the many opinions on this matter, it might be best to postpone the vote on these motions until the April 4th meeting, rather than voting on March 21st. The senate chair asked if the group was willing to postpone the vote and the group voted by voice affirmatively to postpone the vote as above, with one abstention.

VI. Agenda Committee motion to form an ad hoc committee to review the use of teaching evaluations – The senate chair said that the Agenda Committee would like to form an ad hoc committee to review the several concerns raised in the senate regarding how teaching evaluations are being used, particularly in the areas of advancement, promotion, and tenure. She asserted that it is time for the senate to provide some rules by which evaluations should be used by the administration, and said that the deans have requested a voice from the faculty on
this matter. She also said that evaluations should be only a part of how our teaching is evaluated. The Agenda Committee offered the following motion:

_The Faculty Senate shall undertake a study of best practices in evaluation of teaching, particularly with regard to the function and weight of teaching evaluations in the process of evaluating faculty and in the determination of retention, promotion, and tenure decisions. The Faculty Senate shall form an ad-hoc committee which will have faculty representatives from each college, UNH-Manchester, the School of Law, and the Library. The committee will include CCLEAR faculty as well. The Agenda committee shall appoint the committee and may invite selected non-faculty members who could contribute to the study to serve on the committee. The Agenda Committee shall charge the committee to undertake this study and report its findings and recommendations to the Faculty Senate._

The senate chair then asked for discussion on the matter. A senator asked if the underlying assumption is that teaching is the same across every college. Deb said that is not the intent, as each college has their own needs and requirements. She agreed with him that a one-size-fits-all approach may not be useful. Another senator asked if a member of the Senate AAC could be included in this ad hoc committee in order to provide a conduit to the AAC during the process. Deb had no objection and said that this could be a friendly amendment to the motion. The chair of the Senate AAC offered his approval of the idea. A member of the Agenda Committee said that that group is sensitive to the weight of the work of the AAC. Deb said that she is seeking non-senator designees to serve, as well.

She noted that the work of this committee will be quite separate from the issues of the implementation of the online evaluations, which we are already moving towards. She said there are larger issues regarding how evaluations are utilized which must be addressed.

A senator who thanked the Agenda Committee for suggesting this investigation said the initial discussion on this issue arose from questions on the methodology for assessing teaching quality, and said he’d like to see such wording included.

Another senator asked for clarification that these are student evaluations of teaching. Deb suggested adding “student” to the second line (“_student evaluations of teaching_”). A senator said that the first sentence of the motion is very broad, and Deb responded that this conversation is intended to shape the charge to the committee.

The chair of the TEVC committee said that the senate has been concerned about the weight of Question 14, which his committee tried to solve by adding the sum of Q1-13 as part of the evaluative report.

A senator asked if this committee could look into issues of scholarship, as there are many kinds of scholars, including a combined teaching/scholarship perspective. Deb responded that this committee will evaluate the use of teaching evaluations; this is not about research. Deb said that the Agenda Committee will take in today’s suggestions for re-writing the motion and will bring this back to the next senate meeting. She asked that the senators share this information with their colleagues.
VII. TEVC motion on implementation of teaching evaluations - Committee chair Alberto Manalo reported on the ongoing work of his committee. He reminded the group that the senate approved a pilot test of online evaluations at UNH Durham and Manchester for tenured faculty only. Currently non-tenured faculty are still being evaluated by paper. The Committee on the Implementation of Teaching Evaluations (TEVC) proposes that tenure-track and non-tenure track faculty also be evaluated with online evaluations now. The original idea to separate tenured from non-tenured faculty in the method of evaluation was to avoid burdening non-tenured faculty with the unknown factors of the new teaching evaluation forms.

Alberto asserted that the provost has received written commitments from each college dean, agreeing to recalibrate the evaluation ratings, if necessary, should the ratings be consistently low in the new online format. With this new assurance, the TEVC and the Senate Agenda Committee together have re-written the motion which failed to pass senate review. The new motion proposes that:

a. Student evaluation of teaching by untenured and non-tenure track faculty should be administered online beginning Spring Semester 2016. This means that student evaluations of teaching for all faculty members (tenured, untenured and non-tenure track) will be done online beginning Spring Semester 2016.

b. The Faculty Senate should continue analyzing the distribution and means of ratings for the questions in the teaching evaluation, and compare such results with those obtained for the paper evaluations in past years. Based on the analysis, the Faculty Senate will provide to the deans, department chairs and provost the appropriate adjustments. The Faculty Senate shall continue to do so until such time as new norms are fully established.

c. The Faculty Senate should call on the IR&A to generate as soon as possible the reports that the faculty wants, such as the one showing students’ comments together with their responses to the evaluation questions.

A senator said that she was told by someone in Information Technology that the program calculation may be in error, causing the lower ratings. Alberto said he would raise that question with IT. The senator said that she was surprised to see the quantitative and qualitative questions reported separately, and appreciates the suggestion to combine them. She also noted that although her entire class filled out the online evaluation, the report indicated only 50% reporting. She asserted that the general reports of lower response rates may be inaccurate. Alberto said he will ask Institutional Research & Assessment to address the reporting issues.

Another senator suggested that the lower ratings might be the result of students who complete the evaluations in private rather than in the classroom. He posited that when alone, a student may be more likely to freely express any implicit biases. He said he is interested in seeing the response rates for underrepresented groups in a demographic analysis. He asked why there seems to be a rush to implement the online evaluations across the board and asked why IR&A
was not being asked to fix the problems before implementing the online evaluations. As a
department chair, he said he has asked for more nuanced reporting from IR&A and has gotten
less than a positive response from IT.

Another senator asked why the online evaluation is inevitable, saying that we need a richer
history to make a change and asking for more data. Alberto said that other institutions are
using online evaluations with positive results. The senator from the School of Law said that
they transitioned to fully online evaluations in 2013, noting that there were some brief bumps
in the process, but that the value of the change has been that the data is richer and more easily
analyzed. He said it is easier to break the data down by class size and place student answers in
context with the standard deviation.

A senator asked if the time period could be extended in which to complete the evaluations,
and Alberto replied that this is something that IR&A is looking into. The senator from Music
asked if the offered flexibility of questions for different departments will be available this
semester; if not, it will be problematic for his department. He also said it is important in his
department to be able to evaluate courses with fewer than five students because of the nature
of Music courses. Alberto said that the standard policy is not changing with the online
evaluations, and that he did not know if the alternate questions can be applied this spring.

A senator asked what the recommendation will be for an “appropriate adjustment” as noted in
the motion. Alberto said that any such adjustment will be the result of examining the averages
for the colleges and recommending an adjustment based on the discrepancies within each
college as a calculation of averages between paper evaluation results and online evaluation
results. Another senator questioned, under Item B in the motion, when such “new norms”
might be established. She suggested leaving that statement out of the motion and including
instead, “to continue to provide information about the differential between” the previous
norms and the new norms.

Deb said that the deans have communicated a desire to know what the faculty would like
regarding how the evaluations should be used, and she said it is our responsibility to provide
guidelines for the deans to use in the specific issue of the difference between paper and online
evaluation results.

A senator asked the senator from the School of Law, regarding their experience with the
written responses, if those responses in the online format are as rich as the paper evaluations.
The latter senator responded that they were indeed just as rich and fulsome as before. He
reported that he has seen no decline in the pointedness or quality of the written responses.

Another senator asked if TAs and graduate students will also use online evaluations. Alberto
said that they would, and that they are included in the “non-tenure track” group. It was
suggested to change the wording of the motion (Item A), as a friendly amendment, to:

“Student evaluation of teaching by untenured, non-tenure track faculty, and graduate
teaching assistants should be administered online beginning Spring Semester 2016. This
means that student evaluations of teaching for all faculty members (tenured, untenured,
**non-tenure track, and graduate teaching assistants** will be done online beginning Spring Semester 2016.”

A senator shared that some of her colleagues are uncomfortable in general to the move to online evaluations, as the perception exists that these evaluations create the sense of too scientific approach and evaluation; that only numbers matter. This is troubling to her colleagues. Another senator asked if anyone is troubled by the fact that some faculty are being evaluated online and others by paper, creating two different standards of evaluation which he finds unacceptable. He supports the move to online evaluations for all faculty. A senator responded that the use of paper evaluations provides the same data, but in a less precise manner. Another senator said that the asymmetry of two forms of evaluation protects vulnerable, untenured faculty.

The senator above reasserted her colleagues’ resistance to the numerical evaluation, and a member of the Agenda Committee suggested that the proposed ad hoc committee is intended to address just such issues. Another senator asked what role the standard deviation plays into the process and reminded the group of general evidence of bias in online evaluations. Another senator said that going online creates a better data pool to draw from, and suggested that the senate, through the ad hoc committee’s recommendation, could insist that the administration respect our analysis going forward.

The senate chair said that this motion will lay over until the next senate meeting.

VIII. **Agenda Committee motion to amend senate constitution and bylaws** – The senate chair said that this discussion will be postponed to the next meeting, due to time constraints today.

**Discussion/Report Items**

IX. **Student Affairs Committee report on charges 1-4** – Jo Laird, chair of the SAC reported on the following items charged to her committee:

**On built-up dorms:** Presently, there are 1600 students in Built-up Lounges, Built-up Triples, and Built-up Quads. Generally, they have housing space in the second term and will start breaking down lounges this Spring. Students who don’t get their paper work in on time in the Spring will not be able to continue living in the dorms in the Fall. The plan is not to have students in lounges next Fall and to go from 563 to 200 Built-up Triples. However, if the freshman class continues to be so large, UNH will need to “have more beds” to accommodate them. Mr. May thinks that they can build 350 to 500 beds without the student price going way up. For example, a new building between Stoke and Pettee Brook would add 300 beds. However, it seems that an increase in rate is being considered.

A senator said that other institutions guarantee housing for freshmen and, should space run out, hold lotteries for housing space. Jo noted that, if students don’t complete their paperwork on time, they lose their spot. Many students leave the dorms after the first semester. Her committee did not look at comparator universities. The senate chair said that the new dean of students is looking into the priority policy for housing.
On background checks required of students by Human Resources: There are several kinds of background checks: national background checks, state only background checks, county only, criminal background and so on. Costs range (annually) from approximately $25 to over $100 per student, depending upon the depth and breadth of the agency’s mandate regarding completing a background check.

…..Who would be in charge of keeping the information on background checks? A central office? What are the legal ramifications? Will more background checks be needed as the university strives for more experiential learning? The Student Affairs Committee feels ill equipped to answer these questions.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS:

There should be a University-wide review and policy on if and when to inform students of the need for background checks, how the costs/fees are to be managed, and how this potentially highly sensitive information should be used, stored, and safeguarded.

A senator asked if the university should foot the bill for these background checks. Jo said that her committee is not recommending that. Another senator told the group that criminal background checks are required by NH state law. These checks can be quite expensive, and last for only one year. She asserted that if they are going to be required, students need to know in advance. We should also monitor where the information is housed.

On the UNH Professional Success Task Force: On October 19, 2015 (the SAC) met with the acting provost, who said that every college will have a career placement director, starting with COLA. The associate vice provost will oversee the career placement directors. The administration is not talking about adding a new line; somehow 18 advisors will be “found.”

...It is hoped that academic advisors and career counselors can reduce the time students take to graduate and that they can help those students who “drop through the cracks.” Students aren’t going to office hours.

The SAC chair said the question will be how to create more advisor positions without spending more money. The senate chair said that the Agenda Committee can invite someone from the Professional Success Task Force to speak with the senate and answer questions.

A senator asked why each college would need an academic advisor when the university has an Advising and Career Center. Deb said that the UACC is being phased out, and that only 10% of the student body uses it. She noted that career advising is much different than academic advising. She said that each department should have information about connections and opportunities for students in their career planning which would include alumni, parents, and community members.

On the CIE updates to the UNH Study Abroad Program policy: The Student Affairs Committee met with Beth Kilinc, Administrative Director for Education Abroad on
November 30, 2015. Beth said that the Center for International Education has a required International Travel Registry for all UNH-related travel so that they know how to contact people if there are health issues or safety problems.

...The travel registry should now go faster because they will be able to access the IATA travel database.

Beth also said that their short term policy on study abroad will start adding 3 week options in approved programs.

A senator asked if faculty traveling abroad not for the purposes of attending a conference should still register with the International Travel Registry.

X. Finance and Administration Committee report – The senate chair said that this report will be postponed until the next senate meeting.

XI. New Business – There was no new business

XII. Adjournment- It was moved and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 5:31 p.m.