To those whom it concerns,

The Student Senate of the University of New Hampshire recently voted to pass the attached resolution containing the following requests regarding the UNH Discovery Program. In 2015 the Discovery Program underwent a formal periodic review and in the same vein the Student Senate reviewed the program and reached several conclusions. The Student Senate concluded that students should be better educated about the Discovery Program and that the “Program should be less restrictive.” Accordingly, the Student Senate provides several recommendations that meet these conclusions and address additional concerns.

Respectfully,
Gabriel Hoffman
Speaker of the University of New Hampshire Student Senate
Student Senate Resolution XXXVII – 32 Concerning the Discovery Program Requirements

Introduced by: Academic Affairs Chairperson, Justin Poisson

Date: February 28th, 2015

Whereas, the University of New Hampshire (UNH) has general education requirements that every undergraduate must fulfill in order to receive their Bachelor’s degree, and

Whereas, UNH has a specific program that details (with all matters related) these requirements in the Academic Affairs Division of the institution referred to as the Discovery Program, and

Whereas, the Discovery Program, like most departments within UNH, undergoes periodic reviews to make sure the program is running effectively and best serving its users i.e., undergraduate students, and

Whereas, in the 2015 year, the UNH Faculty Senate initiated a search committee with University stakeholders regarding the overall function of the Discovery Program, and

Whereas, in response to this examination and the growing student interest that was loudly expressed in the UNH Student Master Plan¹, the Student Senate in October initiated a review of its own and found that

A. Students should be more knowledgeable about the Discovery Program.
B. Advisors should be thoroughly trained in such a manner that allows them to better understand and explain the framework of the program to students and lessens the amount of student petitions in the case of misadvising or mistaken student selection of a Discovery course.
C. Some Discovery requirements should be less restrictive so students recognize the merit in taking this arrangement of classes.²

Therefore,

Be it resolved by the Student Senate of the University of New Hampshire, that the following recommendations are heeded:

A. Copies of Discovery courses by category are given out when students receive their RAC number to register for classes on Blackboard and also when they have appointments with their advisor

¹ Reference to the UNH Student Master Plan

² Student Perspectives on the Discovery Program
B. Requirements are made clearer during students’ orientations.
C. Both knowledge of the Discovery Program’s aim and the benefits at the core of the program are increased. I.e., professors explain the intent of the discovery prior to each such class.
D. Consistent advisor training be undergone as a part of a uniform program to prevent against any mis-selection of discovery courses.
  a. We define mis-selection as placement into a course that one is taking with the intention of fulfilling one category when it in fact does not.
E. Furthermore, have this training be very intensive of “Degreeworks” with advisors emphatically advertising and adhering (to) this service to such an extent that students have a functional knowledge about how it works and what all of its benefits are.
F. Students have the option of taking only one science class in order to satisfy the Discovery Program requirements (either Physical Science or Biological Science) and/or additionally one course in the Humanities/Social Sciences. We ask that the amount of classes be tapered in a manner deemed fitting.
G. The faculty and the Discovery Committee widen the list for discovery courses in order to allow students to find classes in each discipline that are genuinely appealing and that are not taken simply because of their ease.
H. That the English 401 course is assessed in its consistency in its entirety in regards to grading and content.³

Senate Action: Passes with two abstentions
Speaker Verification: Gabriel Hoffman

³ Student Perspectives on the Discovery Program

• This recommendation is less pedagogical in nature and is rather to ensure fairness and an equal overall utility of the course to students.