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### 2023-2024 FACULTY SENATE XXVIII - August 28 2023 Minutes Summary

Faculty Senate

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UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE  
2023-2024 FACULTY SENATE XXVIII

The fundamental function of the approved minutes of the Faculty Senate is to accurately document actions taken by that body. Additionally, the minutes traditionally seek to provide context by capturing some statements of Senators, faculty in attendance, and guests. The minutes do not verify the veracity, authenticity, and/or accuracy of those statements.

Meeting called to order at 3:10 PM on August 28, 2023, via ZOOM

MINUTES SUMMARY

**I. Comments By and Questions to President Dean**

- General Education/Discovery Redesign: President Dean is confident that this can be completed. He appreciates that the program is now outdated and needs to be updated to better support the success and wellbeing of UNH students. President Dean recently gave a TED Talk where he emphasized the importance of an interdisciplinary curriculum that included both the arts and humanities as well as STEM. Under the practice of Shared Governance, the redesign of the general education falls under the purview of faculty and President Dean supports the work of faculty to make the necessary changes.
- Board of Trustees (BOT): The BOT is concerned with the financial health of the USNH system. President Dean has been meeting with the other [USNH] university presidents, provosts, CFOs and others to discuss what can be done to ensure the system remains financially stable and viable. There is a BOT retreat in late September where these issues will be discussed in greater detail.
- Enrollment: Enrollment of new freshman students is down slightly, but there is an increase in transfers. There is a secular decline across the country with regards to the number of students available to go to college. This results in decreased student enrollment. Under the leadership of Provost Jones and Kim DeRego, the Vice-Provost for Enrollment Planning, UNH has a sophisticated model looking at how to use financial aid resources to optimize student enrollment. More broadly the university is looking for ways to increase our revenues and decrease our expenses.

The floor was opened to questions.

A CHHS senator asked about the budget implications for positions that have not been filled. In answering, President Dean shared that compensation is the largest line item in the budget. The compensation budget went down a few years ago when faculty and staff were given the opportunity to retire. Many took advantage, but on the staffing side in particular, the compensation budget has crept back up. In addition, the pay rises given last year have contributed to an increase in the compensation number. Strategic meetings are now underway to determine which positions should be replaced and which should not. There is collaboration in these decisions with the colleges, departments, and programs, etc. The new interim CFO is working on numbers now to help facilitate a plan in relation to hires.

A COLSA senator asked per President Deans previous comments, how financially committed is the university to revamping discovery? If it is a question of money, is the university willing to commit the funds to properly get the work done? President Dean answered that the over time the

support needed to complete the work has changed. Whether this is done over the summer or during the academic year remains to be determined, but the commitment to making the change remains.

A COLA senator asked if the recent July 1 merger between UNH and GSC will result in a shared course catalogue. She asked for clarity around the ability of UNH students to take courses through CPS Online via a petition process. President Dean turned the question over to Provost Jones and SVPAA Ziemer. Provost Jones shared that we are now one university and as such have one catalogue. However, the degrees at CPS and Durham are different and a student can't split degree requirements. There may be individual courses that are the same within both Durham and CPS. In this case, the decision to allow a Durham student to take a course through CPS Online will be made by the respective college dean with faculty input. There may be times when it benefits the university to allow students outside of Durham to take a class, particularly if that course is under-enrolled.

SVPAA Ziemer added it was determined in the faculty policy committees, both within the merger and in the Faculty Senate, that while CPS Manchester students would be allowed to take courses through CPS Online without any approvals or special steps, matriculating students in Durham would be required to have both an advisor and the dean's office sign off on any such a request. The CPS Online courses are all open admission. The CPS Manchester and UNH Durham courses are not. Students taking courses through CPS Online cannot just register for courses at CPS Manchester or UNH Durham.

The COLA senator continued by sharing concerns that UNH-D students might want to take CPS Online courses to lower tuition costs. SVPAA Ziemer said this won't work because UNH-D and CPS-M students do not pay tuition based on the number of courses but rather pay as a full-time student taking up to 20 credits. Students are still paying their matriculated program rate even if they are able to take one of their classes through the CPS Online division.

A CEPS senator shared a series of examples of how IT upgrades have damaged lab work, created faculty and staff access barriers and wreaked havoc on years of data. President Dean said he will ask Bill Poirier to be in touch so that he may be able to support getting these problems resolved.

Chair Vidya Sundar asked for an update on the status of graduate student housing, particularly as it relates to families. President Dean answered he was disappointed that a partnership the university was exploring with a developer to build graduate housing fell through as it lacked the necessary support from the town of Durham. He then turned the question over to Provost Jones. Provost Jones shared that they ran a pilot program last year that included 50 beds (and some apartments) for graduate students that went well. This year that has doubled to 104 beds. The university is exploring setting aside some university apartments for graduate students and families. As disappointing as it was to have the aforementioned development plan fall through, the university remains in talks with the same developer to see if there is existing UNH land that could be used to build additional graduate housing. In addition, Provost Jones shared there is an effort underway to expand access to graduate student health insurance including vision and dental benefits.

A Paul senator asked if there are any updates on plans to address pedestrian safety on campus. President Dean answered he too has been increasingly concerned with pedestrian safety on

campus and has asked Chief Dean to convene a group of individuals who can effect change on this issue.

President Dean and Provost Jones left the meeting.

## **II. Approval of the minutes from the May 8, 2022-2023 meeting and the May 8, 2023-2024 meeting.**

Both sets of minutes were approved by unanimous consent.

## **III. Comments By and Questions to the Chair**

- SharePoint Site: Chair Vidya Sundar went through some housekeeping items including the new *UNH Faculty Senators 2023-2024* SharePoint site. Within this site is the *Faculty Senate Meetings 2023-2024* folder which houses materials related to senate meeting filed by the meeting date. Standing Committees each have a folder in this SharePoint site. New this year, Standing Committees are being asked to upload summaries of each meeting. They need not be as detailed as minutes, but touch upon the salient points of each meeting and any action items discussed.
- Standing Committee Chairs: Vidya introduced all the Standing Committee chairs.
- Faculty Senate Procedures: Vidya shared the Faculty Senate procedures and rules. All of these points were listed as an appendix to today's agenda.
- New Faculty Senate Website: The website is on a new platform and is currently being updated with [temporarily] missing historic materials.
- Voting Procedures: Vidya shared the following
  - Only senators or their designated proxy may vote.
  - A member has a right to abstain and cannot be compelled to vote.
  - An abstention does not affect the voting result.
  - Most motions require a simple majority vote.
  - The following are examples where a 2/3 vote is required:
    - to close, limit, or extend debate; to suspend the rules; to amend the constitution and bylaws
    - Use RAISE HAND in the Zoom menu when the chair asks for ayes, nays, and abstentions.
    - Members attending by phone will be asked to voice their vote.
- Ad Hoc Faculty Senate Committees: Vidya gave a brief overview of the 3 ad hoc committees. Included in the slide were links to Faculty Senate motions related to the forming of these three committees and the committee work done to date. Find these motions on the Faculty Senate [website](#).

## Motions on current ad hoc committees

<p><b>Diversity Requirement in General Education</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May 2021 - Formation of Ad hoc Committee on General Education Diversity Requirement – <a href="#">Motion XXV-M23</a></li> <li>• Aug 2021 - Membership of General Education Diversity Requirement – <a href="#">Motion XXVI-M2</a></li> <li>• Nov 2021 - Charges for the ad hoc committee on a Gen Ed Diversity Requirement – <a href="#">Motion XXVI-M9</a></li> <li>• May 2022 – Endorsement of public statements affirming UNH’s commitment to diversity <a href="#">Motion XXVI-M22</a></li> </ul>	<p><b>Ad hoc Honors College Committee</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feb 2023 - Joint-Committee for Hamel Honors and Scholars College Development and Implementation <a href="#">Motion XXVII-M4</a></li> <li>• Feb 2023 – Membership for Honors College committee <a href="#">Motion XXVII-M5</a></li> </ul> <p><b>Ad hoc Discovery Committee</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• March 2023 – Ad hoc Discovery Committee <a href="#">Motion XXVII-M6</a></li> <li>• April 2023 – Membership for ad hoc Discovery Committee <a href="#">Motion XXVII-M8</a></li> </ul>
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- The Library Committee: Faculty Senate will be looking at the structure of the Library Committee in the coming weeks.
- NECHE Review: UNH is currently undergoing NECHE accreditation. Site visitors will be coming to campus this October. Senate will support the self-study and the accreditation process as it happens and follow up on any action items that result from the NECHE review.
- 100 Wildcat Celebration: This year marks 100 years of UNH being recognized as a research university. There are many campus activities being planned to commemorate that event.

A COLSA senator asked Vidya if she had any insights with regards to the disconnect between President Dean’s comments regarding university support for revamping the gen ed curriculum and the lack of a demonstrated commitment from the deans.

Vidya answered there is widespread support for re-imagining discovery from both President Dean and the Provost’s Office, but at the same time there are continued conversations at both the college and department level with regards to faculty compensation. Vidya’s hope is that this compensation issue will be finalized in the coming few weeks.

A Paul senator asked about the timeframe related to the committee composition. When will committee members be made aware that they have been chosen to participate? Vidya shared this too is being held up while the compensation piece is being worked out. The work of the committee is expected to take two years, so deans need to evaluate how the change in faculty availability will impact colleges/departments. Vidya reiterated that she hopes to have final decisions on the committee composition and compensation in the next couple of weeks.

A Paul senator raised the issue of tuition costs for the children of UNH faculty and staff to attend UNH. Would exploring this issue be a potential charge for a Faculty Senate committee? It might be worthwhile to explore this issue by looking at tuition incentives at comparable universities related to children of faculty and staff attending the university. Arguably this issue is more relevant due to the pending Honors College. Vidya agreed this could be a charge given to a Standing Committee.

A COLA senator revisited Vidya’s previous answer related to seating the discover revamp committee. How much control do deans have on the committee composition? Vidya answered

that the committee composition falls under the purview of the Faculty Senate, but the deans will need to review a given committee members course load and service requirements when determining compensation.

A COLA senator revisited the tuition benefit issue and shared that reduced tuition is part of the collective bargaining negotiations and although there may be opportunities for parallel tracks and collaboration, this benefit belongs within the purview of the collective bargaining units. That being said, tuition benefits are part of the official USNH policies, thus Faculty Senate may have a role in helping to change policy which in turn could be beneficial for staff and employees who aren't covered by collective bargaining agreements.

A CEPS senator shared that there is a role for Faculty Senate to play in simply gathering information on the issue regardless of whether a motion is introduced.

#### **IV. Discussion on Senate Protocols and Priorities**

Chair Vidya opened the floor to a conversation on the protocols and priorities for this year's Faculty Senate. To get the conversation started, Vidya shared four prompts for senators to consider.

Choose any **one** question

- What do you think should be senate's priorities for this year?
- What can we do differently this year?
- What are your hopes & dreams for senate this year?
- If you had a magic wand, what would you like to see happen this year?

Issues, thoughts, and comments from the floor included:

- The disconnect between UNH's IT department and the IT needs of faculty. This has been very difficult.
- The merger has created a situation(s) where new TT faculty are being added to departments without any department faculty input.
- Senators have an opportunity to change attitudes within their respective departments towards serving on Faculty Senate. Senators are encouraged to find opportunities to highlight the value and importance of the work being done within both Faculty Senate committees and the full senate. Senators have an opportunity to change the climate by placing a value on senate service.
- A desire and opportunities to support satellite campuses such as the Law School, CPS and even the Cooperative Extension to feel more connected to main campus.
- Can Faculty Senate can play a role in ensuring that UNH continues to maintain an investment in instructional design support, as well as training, so that all of our colleagues can achieve best practices in the online programs we're producing.
- In a recent meeting between both divisions of CPS and other online faculty at UNH-D, the group realized that they are each being given different messages from ETS (Enterprise Technology Services).

- The merger is showing the stark differences between how CPS Online and UNH Online run their programs and the role of faculty in these programs. There are discrepancies in faculty rules and expectations in delivering courses leading to feelings of inequity.
- The importance of delineating CPC Manchester and CPS Online. There is a difference between the two and when referencing CPS, it's important to note what division is being referenced.
- In response to a question, a senator from CPS-M explained that CPS-Online, CPS-Manchester and UNH-Durham all offer online courses, but none of these campuses/divisions receive consistent support services from ETS nor is there a common infrastructure for instructional design in place to support all three in a consistent way. Even within the two divisions of CPS there is not a shared approach to delivering online courses.

SVPA Kate Ziemer acknowledged that although the merger is complete it is now in the transition phase. There are unexpected issues that will need attention and she encourages faculty engagement to process and resolve issues that need attention.

Discussion on Faculty Senate priorities and protocols continued. The following issues were raised:

- Add a rule for limiting floor time to 1 minute or less.
- Faculty Senate should recognize the need to focus on ChatGPT and AI.
- Opportunities to create a culture less concerned with academic honesty but rather simplify the grading structure.
- Chair for the Finance and Administration Committee.
- A better understanding of issues related to sponsored projects. In particular in relation to over and under payments of individuals involved in these projects.
- Ensuring Faculty Senate is engaged in the funding cuts referenced in the president's earlier remarks.
- A reset in the perceived tone of last year's senate where members reported feeling quashed or muted. Perhaps their comments were perceived to be speaking in bad faith. This senator hopes for a change in these perceptions and to establish a culture where it is assumed everyone is acting in good faith regardless of whether you agree with his/her comments and contributions. Doing so will also help foster a better attitude across the university about serving in senate.

With no other senators wishing to share thoughts, Vidya ensured the group was aware that she does not consider this conversation to be over and hopes members of Faculty Senate will continue to share with her their feelings, thoughts, questions, and suggestions throughout the year. Vidya went on to share that her hope for the Faculty Senate this year is to hear the voices of all senators at least once.

## **V. New Business**

A CEPS senator thanked Vidya and the whole Agenda Committee for getting Faculty Senate off to a strong start.

## **VI: Recess into Committees**

A motion was made to recess Faculty Senate and allow senators to go into breakout rooms with their Standing Committees.

### **VII. Committee Return and Reports**

After recessing Faculty Senate reconvened offering committees an opportunity to report on the work of their respective breakout rooms.

A few committees reported that they hope to hold their first meeting of the AY in person. One committee reported their intent to collaborate with another committee on the AI issue.

### **VIII. The meeting was adjourned.**