

University of New Hampshire

University of New Hampshire Scholars' Repository

Faculty Senate Agendas & Minutes

Faculty Senate Documents

2-21-2022

2021-2022 FACULTY SENATE XXVI - February 21, 2022

Faculty Senate

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholars.unh.edu/faculty_senate_agendas_minutes

Recommended Citation

Faculty Senate, "2021-2022 FACULTY SENATE XXVI - February 21, 2022" (2022). *Faculty Senate Agendas & Minutes*. 56.

https://scholars.unh.edu/faculty_senate_agendas_minutes/56

This Text is brought to you for free and open access by the Faculty Senate Documents at University of New Hampshire Scholars' Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in Faculty Senate Agendas & Minutes by an authorized administrator of University of New Hampshire Scholars' Repository. For more information, please contact Scholarly.Communication@unh.edu.

UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
2021-2022 FACULTY SENATE XXVI

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 February 21,2022, via ZOOM MINUTES SUMMARY

I. Provost Jones comments and questions

- A. Provost Jones shared a PowerPoint presentation of the university's administrative organizational chart. This included the offices of the provost, president, systems, and board of trustees.
- B. Update regarding students hit by cars on campus. In the last 2 years there have been two pedestrian incidents on campus where students were hit by a car requiring a trip to the hospital. Both incidents happened on Main Street. There is a committee that evaluates all walking and driving paths on campus. This group did not meet during COVID but have since resumed. The committee's top priority is to look at how to make pedestrian activity safer. Several proposals are being looked at including better lighting, a stop light, a dedicated walking path and others. Provost Jones anticipates reviewing what this committee recommends by the end of Spring semester.
- C. UNH continues to track roughly 40 bills in the state legislature. These bills focus on several topics, COVID and academic freedom included. Provost Jones acknowledged the pressure university faculty senates across the country are feeling related to putting forth statements on academic freedom. He shared the need to be cautious in doing so. It's important to stand on firm bi-partisan ground that supports freedom of speech as a core mission and priority. As an example, Provost Jones shared the University of Texas, Austin's faculty senate passed a resolution aimed at this very issue and within a week the state legislature introduced bills threatening tenure. This being said, it is important for faculty at UNH to have access to information surrounding the work of the legislature. Tom Cronin is the expert.
- D. With regards to Sexual Violence Prevention, the Provost's office has been working closely with the SVAC student group. There was a rally that both Wayne and Kate attended. In addition, there was a town hall around the 22 commitments that have been made. One commitment is a survey for students. This survey will be going out soon.

Questions for Provost Jones

- 1. The first questioner asked if there are any updates on contract negotiations? Answer: No, not yet. Hoping for news as early as March 24, but nothing yet.
- 2. A senator shared her personal experience with the campus COVID testing/results system. This experience was at the New England Center. She had trouble receiving her results. Secondly, she tested positive on a home testing kit and notified the university. She was surprised no one reached out to her for contact tracing. Answer: With regards to the testing and subsequent results, Provost Jones shared there had been a glitch in the lab.

Upon further discussion it was determined the time frames did not match. Provost Jones asked the senator to share her experience with him and Marian McCord via an email. He would like to further evaluate. With regards to contact tracing, the university is contact tracing around their own tests, not home tests. Additionally, student contact tracing is being prioritized.

3. The question was asked as to why the chancellor's position at UNH is being phased out? What is the advantage of this? Secondly, Governor Sununu in his State of the State address said the state is sitting on a large budgetary surplus. Will UNH receive any of this money? Answer: Provost Jones shared that he cannot speak to the motivation of the Board of Trustees but did share that a system with only 3 campuses may not need a dedicated chancellor. The idea is being promoted for the university president to serve as both president and chancellor. With regards to the Governor's address, the university does see this as an opportunity to invest in higher education. Proposals are currently in the works calling for budgets allowing the university to continue its 6 year trend of no tuition increases. There are also efforts around capital construction – particularly around graduate student housing. Since the legislature is on a biennial budget cycle, budget requests are being developed that will not be advanced until next year's legislative session.
4. A senator asked for guidance on the best way to navigate the state legislature's website(s). Given UNH's great model of transparency, is there a way the university could provide more guidance and information regarding what relevant legislation is pending in Concord? Answer, Provost Jones leans on Tom Cronin for this information. Goal is to have Tom Cronin come and do a presentation/information sharing session with the faculty senate. Kevin shared he intends to invite Tom to the March 7 meeting of the FS. There was a discussion around making some of Tom's work available for faculty to view – such as legislative testimony, certain correspondence, etc.

Provost Jones ended his comments by saying it was nice not having COVID dominate the conversation, though COVID is not “behind us”. Despite being below 100 active cases, it is still 100 active cases. Though there is continued pressure to remove the mask mandate, the university would prefer to reach a more COVID stable plateau.

Provost Jones left the meeting

II. Motion recognizing Andrew Colby, Liz Smith and Melina Elwy

Faculty Senate Vice-Chair Matthew MacManes introduced a joint motion between the Agenda Committee and the Academic Affairs Committee recognizing Andrew Colby for his years of commitment to the university community and to Liz Smith and Melina Elwy for their work in their new interim roles. Given this motion is not substantive in nature, the faculty senate voted to suspend the rules and allow an immediate vote on the motion. The motion passed with 51 ayes, 0 nays and 0 abstentions.

III. Updates and questions to the Chair

- Vote of no confidence HR Update: The AC met with the chairs of the RPSC and FAC, Ivo Nedyalkov and Stephen Pimpare respectively, to discuss short and long term goals and to ensure all 3 committees were in line with one another on expectations regarding HR and shared governance. An agenda was drafted for the to-be-scheduled joint meeting between the AC, the 2 committee chairs, Kathy Neils and Jim McGrail. In the interest of keeping the conversation moving, Kevin and Matt will be meeting with Kathy N and Jim

M face to face tomorrow morning. The take away here is incremental progress is being made regarding FS and HR.

- There is a FS election this spring. Amanda will be sending out a faculty spreadsheet to all department chairs and admin assistants to confirm department faculty lists.
- The AC has appointed Gregg Moore to the UNH Research Council.

Questions to the chair

- A comment was put in the chat regarding the Team Dynamic situation and how it is not improving in terms of turn around time. Kevin replied he would add to the open document shared with the provost and management leadership.

IV. Approval of Minutes from 12/13/2021 and 2/7/2022

Both were approved.

V. Motion to Endorse First Day Complete

Chair Kevin Healey wants the FS to have a say regarding the university adopting the First Day Complete program. By introducing the motion, the senate generates movement among senators and their departments regarding the support (or not) for FDC. Introducing the motion today will give faculty two weeks to review the materials provided by SVPAA Kate Ziemer.

- A motion to endorse First Day Complete was introduced by Jim Connell.

Jim Connell reiterated introducing this motion and having a vote will ensure the Faculty Senate took a stance regardless of what decision the university makes on the FDC program.

SVPAA Kate Ziemer was offered an opportunity to share thoughts on the program. She shared the following:

- FDC enables faculty to submit course materials – including open educational resources – into a single portal. Barnes and Noble leverages these materials across scale to provide a significantly reduced cost to students.
- The program is rental based with an option to buy.
- The books and online materials are guaranteed to be delivered either to the student's home, campus bookstore or online via Canvas by the first day of class.
- Prices are negotiated on a yearly basis.
- Students have the option to opt out.
- Advantage to students is they get their books for the first day of class; advantage to faculty is the materials and books are guaranteed, so there isn't the issue of students "not being able to find the book(s)" or accidentally securing the wrong edition.
- Disadvantage: as students get into higher classes, there may no longer be cost savings as there may be less materials required for a given class. Important to help students understand the differential and opt out when it's in their financial interest to do so.

Catherine Moran, chair of the SAC reiterated the AC was not inserting itself into the work of the SAC. The committee did not feel prepared to put a motion on the floor endorsing the FDC program. The committee felt there was a need for more information. The timing was too quick. The committee also had a concern regarding student knowledge of the program, and about corporate monopoly. SAC endorses further exploration of FDC.

Kevin shared materials regarding FDC will be made available after the meeting. Please share these documents with your departments. After reviewing the materials, if there are questions left unanswered, please bring those to the AC.

- VI. Charles Vannette, chair of the Academic Programs Committee introduced a motion to lift the moratorium regarding online delivery of synchronous and asynchronous honors courses. With the exception of COVID, currently honors classes cannot be offered online. The committee has had long discussion with Catherine Peebles, director of the University Honors Program regarding this motion.

Question: Is there already a process for requesting an honors course be offered online? Catherine Peebles shared there is not. It was further suggested it is the Writing Intensive that can be offered online. Charles Vannette said in fact, it is these writing classes that helped direct this effort. Catherine Peebles clarified moving to putting honors courses online is not the direction the honors program is headed, but having the opportunity to take an honors class this way could be helpful in certain circumstances.

Question: Is there sense of how many online courses honors students would take once students return to the traditional face to face learning model? Secondly, how would these students be monitored? Answer, very few online classes will be offered. Two were offered this past summer. One will be offered this summer. As for monitoring, the honors program isn't at a place where students could take several online classes making the need for monitoring unnecessary right now. However, a structure will need to be put in place in the future for this purpose.

Question: Is the discovery committee involved in this initiative? Answer, yes. The feeling across the board is support for this idea. COVID forced a dry run of increasing online learning opportunities. The goal is not to pivot so much as provide other opportunities. This direction is in part to address the academic needs of a motivated student with full academic load. Online courses, particularly in the summer allows a student to take an honors course when her/his schedule is more accommodating.

Question: Are the classes being referenced specific to the discovery courses honors students are required to take? Some departments, computer sciences for example, don't have many honors students. Answer: Those students on an honors path in a department without an honors program are referred to as Honors in Major. In this situation, contracts with the students are drawn up and accommodations made. These students are not enrolled in the honors courses under the auspices of the university honors program. For a student on this track, accommodations are made to create an honors curriculum within a non-honors course. This motion relates to courses already designated as an honors course within the university honors program and is not intended to address students enrolled as honors in major.

Kevin asked Charles Vannette to share with the senate the other two motions his committee is intending to introduce a future senate meeting.

Charles Vannette: This honors motion plus a motion regarding DLab and Inquiry makes up 70% of the APC work this semester. All 3 motions pertain to allowing these classes to be taught remotely. In the interest of allowing for a discussion, each of the three areas will be presented as separate motions rather than one motion incorporating all three.

V. Resolution supporting UNH Comprehensive Prevention Plan

Catherine Moran, chair of the Student Affairs Committee presented a resolution supporting the recently released UNH comprehensive plan titled: *Comprehensive Prevention Plan: Strategies to Address Interpersonal Violence, Sexual Health & Well-being, and Alcohol & Other Drugs Use at UNH.*

Catherine shared the SAC met with 3 authors of the report Kate Gladstone, Dawn Zitney and Kathleen Grace Bishop. This plan is thorough, proactive rather than reactive, holistic, and based in supporting health and well being. Further, the plan focuses on healthy relationships, boundaries and factual information about sex, sex education and violence prevention. Importantly the plan includes the exploration of alcohol and drugs on campus and provides a framework for the 22 commitments.

Question: Chair Kevin Healey asked if by voting for this resolution the senate is creating a scenario in which it would be unable to lobby for future changes, such as additions and/or recommendations to this new plan?

Answer: Voting in favor of the resolution will not preclude the senate from engaging in changes in the future. In fact, one example of a future change might be around the plan's requirement of mandatory training. This would include the need to involve collective bargaining agreements and thus may cause a scenario where changes would need to be made to the current plan. Catherine clarified, mandatory trainings aren't necessarily the issue, but rather how these trainings would be operationalized.

Question: Has the student senate endorsed this plan? Answer: Catherine did not know if the student senate had endorsed the plan but offered to find out.

Question: The report calls for two more administrators to be added to Health and Wellness. Will this addition mean cuts to other important entities such as law enforcement, clinicians, faculty, etc. Answer: The committee did consider the resource constraints felt by all, however, the university has already committed to hiring additional staff/faculty to work in the area of sexual assault prevention. These positions are not necessarily designated within Health and Wellness, but the financial commitment from the university is already there. Catherine will seek further clarification as to where these newly committed resources from the university will sit.

VI. Committee Updates

1. Andrew Seal, chair of the AAC shared 2 reports. The first refers to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. The committee discussed whether they were in fact the correct group to take up this charge. The committee determined the FS is missing a dedicated DEI committee and is recommending one be established.

Kevin mentioned he originally thought the AAC report might find a home in the Ad Hoc Committee on Diversity Requirement in GE. He asked that committee chair Anna Wainwright if she might have thoughts as to how the two are connected. Anna shared that her newly formed committee has had two meetings. Subcommittees have been established. Anna continued to share the ad hoc committee is focused on curriculum. Staying focused on curriculum is a commitment the committee made at its last meeting. Andrew shared that a DEI committee would look beyond curriculum and include work around faculty hiring and retention.

The second report AAC forwarded to the AC is related to tracking academic minor degrees. Since initially presenting this topic last semester, the committee is recommending a pause on this initiative. With the registrar's office currently in transmission, the time is not right for implementing a pilot program.

Kevin followed up that after talking with the ad hoc Diversity committee at their last meeting, he appreciates the committee would like to focus on their original charge of curriculum-based work. Further, establishing either a DEI ad hoc committee or a standing committee would allow the Agenda Committee to appoint individuals with expertise in this area. Given the importance of DEI, it would not make sense

to assign this to a current standing committee of the senate that perhaps lacks the membership expertise required.

2. Julie Holcombe, chair of the ITC spoke of her committee's work with Rachel Burdin around the teaching evaluation software application to review what may or may not replace BLUE. In addition, Crowd Strike is a concern for the ITC. There has been restructuring with the ETNS and ITC is working to ensure their voice is not lost in this restructuring. The committee is also concerned with faculty privacy.

Question: Do you know if the committee is leaning towards continuing with BLUE or procuring a different teacher evaluations software tool? Julie offered that Rachel Burdin would be better able to answer that question.

Rachel shared she had just come from a meeting on this issue. She shared there were hurdles with changing software at this time. Data needs to be cleaned up and currently only BLUE has this ability. Now does not feel like the right time to make changes. Within the next week, the committee expects to recommend the university continue with BLUE.

3. Ivo Nedyalkov, chair of the Research and Public Service Committee shared an update with his committee's charge around the UNH Land Acknowledgement Statement. The committee now has a draft report on an indigenous peoples land acknowledgment. In addition, the committee has a draft motion approving the report. The committee has a second motion for FS endorsing the land, water and life acknowledgment statement. This motion includes a few follow up actions.

VII. New Business

Sevltana Peshkova shared her desire to have UNH address the assaults on academic freedom occurring across the country including here in NH. She shared there has been a systematic organized attempt to limit academic freedom, particularly on education about race and American history at American universities. Some faculty feel the university should pass a resolution calling for the protection of the freedom of education, freedom of expression, and freedom of teaching critical race theory at American universities. Svetlana shared a template being circulated in the academic community with language universities can adapt for individual use.

Chair Kevin Healey shared procedurally the Agenda Committee would assign the work of crafting a resolution to a standing committee of the FS. Parliamentarian Jim Connell shared this is correct, though the AC too could craft a resolution. This resolution is best done in collaboration with the university's government affairs representative or Provost Wayne Jones. Jim went on to note discussions around a senate resolution regarding academic freedom have been discussed repeatedly in the AC. The conversations have involved Provost Wayne Jones.

Kevin shared he had spoken to both Tom Cronin and Wayne Jones. As Provost Jones articulated at the start of this meeting, there are ongoing discussions between UNH administration, the governor's office and specific New Hampshire state legislators who are crafting these bills. As a result, the senate may wish to pause on drafting a resolution until the outcome of these discussions is known. There is a current bill, HB 1313 intending to expand on the previous bill that passed and include restrictions specifically for public institutions of higher education. Kevin continued to share that it is his understanding the New Hampshire Attorney General has some concerns about whether this type of legislation is constitutional. Furthermore, any resolution drafted or passed by the FS has an audience that includes the entire state of

New Hampshire, the New Hampshire state legislature and the governor's office. Movement by the FS could antagonize those legislators and others. In the end, the result could prove counterproductive.

Kevin shared none of this precludes drafting a resolution. Any efforts curbing free speech and academic freedom has a negative impact on all regardless of beliefs.

The Senate discussed how limiting freedom of speech and academic freedom is a movement in the wrong direction. The FS needs to take a position that supports ensuring both freedom of speech and academic freedom for elementary, middle and high school teachers too. Students arriving at UNH from schools where censoring is occurring leaves freshman ill prepared for higher education. There was a question asking what the university lawyers are saying. Kevin talked about the need for greater information sharing between the work of government affairs and the faculty. Good work is being done, but not made readily available to faculty. The example of Tom Cronin's testimony to the state legislature on HB 1313 was cited. This is the very kind of information that could be made available to those who are interested. The conversation needs to continue. The agenda committee will be raising this issue with Provost Jones and SVPAA Kate Ziemer. Lastly, a senator reminded the group that there are licensed faculty on staff who do risk losing their licenses.

The meeting was adjourned.