2020-2021 FACULTY SENATE XXV - October 19, 2020 Minutes

Summary

Faculty Senate

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Meeting called to order at 3:10 pm on October 19, 2020, via ZOOM

MINUTES SUMMARY

I. Roll: The following senator was absent: Feldman. The following were guests: Wayne Jones, Kate Ziemer, Shari Robinson, and Andy Colby.

II. Remarks by and questions to the provost –

The provost provided the following updates:

- The R+30 enrollment figures are now available. UNH enrollment for this semester is at 15,559 students. This is approximately 450 fewer students than we had at this time last year. Some of the losses are related to the ending of the Navitas program and a drop in full-time first-time freshmen. There were some gains in graduate programs, and this helped to offset some of the losses in other areas. In total, UNH enrollment is down about 2.4% over last year. Given the covid circumstances, the administration feels that this is not a bad outcome, compared to the projections made back in April.

The budget has been affected by significant costs for the Covid testing strategy. Although the testing strategy has been effective and we are receiving recognition across the region and the country for it, it is an expensive effort. This has been a big one-time cost of doing business in the pandemic.

The university will also have some costs associated with the CERP (COVID-19 Early Retirement Program). However, those are one-time costs. In the long run, this will allow us to do more hiring and do many of the things that we want to do in a strategic way.

The BOT is not holding UNH to a specific operating margin this year and they are allowing us to take grants and gifts out of the operating margin. Our job in the next three to six months is to be very effective and strategic as possible.

- The BOT is very interested to know how things are going on the campus. The System conducted a pulse survey in September to get a snapshot of how students are feeling about their courses in general, not at the individual course level, and whether students feel satisfied that there is enough engagement. The results showed that students thought the level of engagement was best in face-to-face courses. Also, if a student intended for a course to be taken online, they tended to be more satisfied than if the course was changed to online at the last minute. Many students reported that if they knew going in when they registered for the course what the format was, they would have been better off. A common theme that showed up in the data is that students are struggling most with the rotational face to face courses. We also know that many faculty are also struggling with the rotational format. The survey results are available at the IR&A website, https://unh.app.box.com/s/0de1j77kpjg5v0ugclbficuoivo9c2002 Another survey will be conducted this week and then another a few weeks after that.
The public facing data doesn't break down the results by college, but the deans have that data and they will be sharing it with associate deans and department chairs.

The balance of courses - the relative percentage of online versus face-to-face - has been at a pretty comfortable level this semester for the yellow environment. Deans have been advised to work with their faculty to deploy a similar balance for the spring, but we may be able to pivot some more courses to face-to-face. Individual departments and the deans will set up course modalities as they think is appropriate.

All should take advantage of the data from the system survey. We are trying to fulfill our commitment to our students. If we know that a faculty member or that a particular mode of delivery is not working for a particular course, let's try a different mode. If hybrid is not working, let's try face-to-face or let's try rotational. The deans have been advised to not push the mix any further toward online because the students were dissatisfied with that. We should stay the same or push it a little bit more toward face-to-face whenever we can.

- In terms of temporary accommodations due to covid, faculty who have been approved for an accommodation for the fall semester can work through accommodations for the spring with their chair and dean. There is no need to submit new requests if someone was already approved for the fall. However, if someone has a new medical condition, they should go through the formal accommodation process.

*The provost offered to take questions:*

- A CEPS senator asked if there was any chance that some of the large courses could be taught in larger rooms to avoid having to do rotational teaching. Wayne said that he has heard some thinking about an idea of all students from a large class meeting in a large room like the Strafford or Granite State Room once a week with a remote session on the second class day. A different large course would use the same room on the day that the other class is meeting remotely. As well, there is work being done to assess to what extent the large rooms in the MUB, including the MUB theatres, are actually being used. It appears that some faculty have pulled back from using them and they are sitting unused right now.

- A COLA senator asked about the system survey where students are self-reporting that they are participating more in the face-to-face classes versus their online classes. Some students might feel that they're participating just by showing up in a classroom. However, based on this professor’s experience teaching online, there does not appear to be a difference in terms of actual engagement. Wayne said that he doesn't have a good answer but suggested that faculty look at the underlying comments from students in the survey data. Wayne cautioned that this is a snapshot of data and it doesn't define success or failure. He is more interested in watching how the results move over the course of the semester. The initial survey was based on the experience of students after just two weeks. The students are learning how to operate in this environment and faculty are learning as well. There is more interest in the trendline.

- Another COLA senator said that one of the unexpected things that has happened in his course and in others is a migration by students from in-person to online. For example, in his face-to-face course there is a synchronous Zoom feed available in case anybody needs to quarantine. The majority of his students are now participating via Zoom. It is difficult to discuss health conditions with students, so it
is unclear how to investigate why students have gone remote. Wayne responded that one option being considered is to rewrite a version of the informed consent document to include a statement that says that students are expected to be in person for face-to-face courses unless the student has a note from the dean of students. The other change that is happening is that the Registrar is creating an opportunity for students to register for a remote version of a class versus an online version. The course would have two section numbers and students would choose to be fully remote or fully face-to-face. If they chose the face-to-face route they would be expected to be in class in-person. Kate Ziemer commented further saying that the idea is to have students make a commitment as they register and to indicate their intention for how they will participate in the course. These courses with two different section numbers are called sister sections. It is still one class being taught but the registrants are separated into those who are committing to do online and those who are committing to face-to-face. This will allow the faculty member to understand how students plan to participate in the class.

Kate explained that faculty are able to indicate when they submit their spring courses if there is an option for the course to be taken remotely (i.e., a sister section). The course would have a separate CRN for the remote option so that the instructor can differentiate the enrollments. The "offered remotely" option is intended for people who are not going to be on campus. This process is evolving. ASAC has been involved quite a bit and most of the communication on this has been through ASAC. The provost added that he will make a point of bringing this up at the upcoming Dean's Council meeting to ensure that the deans understand to bring information about this back to their executive committees. Any questions should be directed to the associate deans.

- A CEPS senator asked about the ability for some graduate students and clinically oriented undergraduates to stay on campus after Thanksgiving and what testing protocols would be in place to allow them to stay active on campus through December and January. Wayne shared that the number of students needing on-campus student housing is going to be relatively small. Most graduate students don't live in campus housing and most of the students that are upper division students doing clinicals tend to live off campus in apartments. The level of campus activities is going to be relatively low, but plans are being made to take care of the students who remain, including for dining and other services. The testing protocol is going to continue, and the details are being worked out on how to operationalize it.

A memo will be going out to students this week in connection with students who need winter housing. Students who need housing during the break do not stay in their normal room. Instead, these students are housed in one of the residence halls that is dedicated for this purpose. There will be one dining hall available during the break as well.

- The goal is to transition faculty and staff into the on-campus testing protocol after Thanksgiving because the number of tests needed will be way down at that point. Also, students who are going to be in labs and clinicals will be expected to continue with testing. There will also be a testing expectation for students living in the community of Durham as we made this commitment to the town to do that. We are working through the logistical challenges of how to track students during this time.

- A COLA senator asked about what the university's plans are for the Covid lab once we get through this crisis given that it was expensive to set up. Wayne said that there are active discussions going on about this right now.
- A final question was asked about the testing protocol once faculty and staff begin using the UNH lab for testing. If a faculty/staff person tests positive will they be required to go to Health and Wellness for a confirmatory test or will they be able to be tested by an outside health care provider? Wayne said that he didn't know the answer but would find out.

III. Remarks by and questions to the chair - Erin Sharp shared the following updates:

- November 3rd is election day. The university has a policy that no exams should be given on Election Day.

- November 11 is Veteran’s Day and this remains as a University holiday with no classes.

- There was recently a question about whether there would be a change to curtailed operations. Erin has asked the provost about this and it appears that there will be no change to the curtailment process. A senator pointed out that because many classes are taught online or could easily be taught online, there may be a natural urge for some faculty to hold the class anyway. However, because of variation in conditions, i.e., power, this should not happen. She asked if there was a way to communicate to faculty about this. Erin suggested that this issue could be sent to a senate committee.

- Senate vice chair Rose Came is no longer able to serve in the Senate due to an unexpected leave. Rose’s service has been very valuable. The Senate governance documents indicate that should a replacement be needed during the academic year, candidates for the replacement position shall be presented to the senate by the Agenda Committee. Additional candidates may be nominated from the floor. The Faculty Senate shall elect a replacement by majority vote. Erin shared that Kevin Healey, a current member of the Agenda Committee from the Department of Communication in COLA, has agreed to serve in the vice chair role. However, additional nominations are being accepted including self-nominations and these should be sent to Erin. Any nominees must be tenured faculty. The election will be held at the next Senate meeting. Nominations are also being accepted for a replacement member for the Agenda Committee.

IV. Approval of the Minutes from October 5, 2020 - Changes were suggested for Sections II, V, VII, and IX. It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes of October 5. Thus adjusted, the minutes were unanimously approved with 2 abstentions.

V. One-minute reports from Committee chairs:

Clay Mitchell, chair of the Campus Planning Committee sent an update in writing that the committee is looking at questions that have come up about covid testing.

Michel Charpentier, Chair of the Information Technology committee shared that the committee has started to review the data obtained from the IT survey that was distributed a few weeks ago. The committee will be reviewing it jointly with Terri Winters at the next ITC meeting.

Ivo Nedyalkov, chair of the Research and Public Service Committee reported that the committee has representatives on many university wide committees focused on research and engagement. The committee is making progress on finishing up work on the charge related to engaged scholarship. Senators should send any input to Ivo.

Andrew Coppens, chair of the Student Affairs committee explained that he is serving on a university Student Engagement Committee. One focus of that committee’s work is student
programming and they are interested in faculty ideas for student engagement during three time periods
1) the remainder of the fall semester when students will be on campus, 2) the move-in week at the end
of January and 3) spring semester. Please send any suggestions to Andrew.

Shari Robinson shared that a subcommittee under the incident response team has been working along
with the Student Senate to provide a campus review process for student organizations to request
permission to meet in person.

The Senate chair shared that Kathy Brunet, the Senate admin is also serving on a subcommittee to
develop ideas for communicating student events.

VI. AAC motion on two individual days off in Spring 2021 Academic calendar - Joe Dwyer reminded
senators that a motion on the spring calendar was passed at the last meeting of the senate. However, the
goal was to add two single “no class” days to that calendar. Joe presented the following motion that
was developed with the assistance of the Registrar’s Office:

AAC Motion on scheduling “no class” days for Spring 2021
presenter: Joe Dwyer, Academic Affairs Committee

Rationale: The senate passed a motion on October 5, 2020 to adjust the Academic Calendar for
Spring 2021, specifying the beginning and end dates and eliminating spring break. However,
that motion left undecided whether or not to give students any no-class days, as a break, during
the spring semester or which dates those no-class days should be. As a result, the Academic
affairs committee was charged to work with the registrar’s office to make
recommendations about these no-class days.

Motion: The Faculty Senate approves the following modifications to the Academic Calendar
for Spring 2021 to include no-class days on Friday March 19th and Friday April 16th.

For Spring 2021, there shall be two Friday ‘no-class’ days as specified below. This requires
converting one Monday and one Tuesday to Friday class days. This change balances the
calendar so that there are 14 class days across M, T, W, R, and F.

The revised Spring 2021 academic calendar would be:

Monday, February 1 Classes begin
Monday, March 8 Follows a Friday class schedule
Friday, March 19 Mid-semester
Friday, March 19 No Classes (University offices open)
Tuesday, April 13 Follows a Friday class schedule
Friday, April 16 No classes (University offices open)
Tuesday, May 11 Last day of classes
Wednesday, May 12 Reading Day (curtailed operations make up day?)
Thursday, May 13 Reading Day
Friday, May 14 Final exams begin
Thursday, May 20 Final exams end
Saturday, May 22 Commencement Ceremony
Joe reviewed that previous discussions about scheduling “no class days” at the last meeting focused on a concern that “no classes” on Mondays could potentially result in four-day weekends for students who have no classes on Fridays and this would not be desirable given the covid situation. Any calendar proposal must result in an equal number of courses across the week. Therefore, two days off will require some adjustment to other days.

Mid-week “no class” days were thought to not offer the break benefits that a Friday or Monday “no class” day offers.

Andy Colby, the Registrar, joined the meeting to assist with questions.

The following questions and concerns were raised:

- If a Monday is following a Friday schedule, will the common exam time fall on the Monday? Andy Colby confirmed that this would be the case.
- One senator pointed out that having long weekends outside of busier travel times would be useful in reducing the infection spread.

The chair proposed that the Senate rules be suspended to all allow for this motion to be voted on today. There were no objections to this.

The motion was put to a vote. The motion passed with 55 in favor, none opposed and 8 abstentions.

VII. AAC motion on common exam time for Spring 2021 - Joe Dwyer, Chair of the Academic Affairs Committee presented the following motion:

**AAC Motion on Common Exam time**

Rationale: UNH is planning to provide face-to-face education to students in Spring 2021 with the highest priority given to the health and safety of all students, faculty, and staff during the COVID-19 pandemic. These plans require following social distancing recommendations that continue to be in flux. Therefore, more classroom space is needed to schedule courses that offer the greatest opportunity for face-to-face instruction while protecting the health and safety of faculty, staff, and students. Allowing the common exam times to continue as was done in Fall 2020 would free up about a significant number of classrooms during prime learning hours on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

The motion only addresses the Spring 2021 semester.

This motion for Spring 2021 common exam time would result in the same common exam time that was approved by the Senate’s Agenda Committee in June 2020, *Motion # XXV-M1 on changing Common Exam Time for Fall 2020.*

**Motion:** The Faculty Senate approves for the Spring 2021 Semester that weekly Common Exam Times continue as they have been in the Fall 2020 semester as:

**Tuesday 7:00 – 10:00 pm**
The Faculty Senate calls upon the Deans to convene a meeting soon of department chairs and administrators to explain the change and its consequences and to adjudicate such questions as to how departments will schedule exams within this new time frame.

The following questions, comments and concerns were discussed:

- The Student Senate passed a resolution on the previous day about concerns with the Tuesday evening common exam time. Their resolution pointed out that this is not an ideal time for exams due to the late hour and challenges with students who have scheduled evening classes. The Student Senate resolution proposed a common exam time of Tuesday and Thursday 12:40 to 2 p.m. This would be a return to the original daytime common exam times.

- There was a concern that IT services are not available on Tuesday evening when online exams are being given during the common exam time.

- There was a concern that the Testing Center managed by the Student Accessibility Services is not available during the Tuesday evening common exam time.

- In response to discussions about other daytime options, the Registrar offered that 8am would be a time with a very low number of classes and this would be an alternative option for a common exam time.

- Although there is not information about the number of classes that use the common exam time, the classes that do use it generally have large enrollments. Also, some faculty are using common exam time without the registrar knowing because they are using it for online exams and no room reservation is required.

- A Paul College senator pointed out that his college has had an evening exam slot for many years. He also pointed out that he feels that the AAC proposal is the best option among imperfect solutions.

There was a discussion about whether to hold off on a vote on this motion. However, given the urgency in preparing the course schedules for the spring semester, and without clear alternatives presented, the decision was made to put the motion to a vote.

The chair asked if there were objections to moving forward on the vote. There were no objections.

The motion was put to a vote. The motion passed with 43 yes, 3 no, and 14 abstentions.

VIII. APC motion on student evaluations of teaching for Academic Year 2020/2021 – Lisa MacFarlane, chair of the Academic Program Committee presented background information about the following motion.
The Faculty Senate intends to provide an opportunity for students to provide feedback that can be used formatively to assess and improve teaching while also supporting faculty and holding individuals harmless for COVID-related issues that are out of their control. The Faculty Senate therefore moves a two-part motion:

One, during COVID-conditions (yellow, orange, or red), the Senate will suspend the student evaluations of teaching used prior to Spring 2020.

Two, the Senate will replace them with end of semester surveys that address the effectiveness of course modalities, technologies, and pedagogy. These surveys should be formative in nature and administered with the intent that the information gathered be used to improve the academic experience for both students and faculty in the spring of 2021, when we anticipate a continuation of our current status. We anticipate three brief sets of open-ended questions: one set on the instructor/course effectiveness; one set specific to course modality; and one set determined by each program or department to address the specific challenges of different disciplines.

Faculty may, if they choose, opt instead to use the on-line teaching evaluations used prior to Spring 2020 by notifying the Information Technology team through their departmental or college administrator.

Neither the surveys nor the standard evaluations are to be used in assessments for renewal or promotion and tenure decisions unless the faculty member explicitly asks for them to be admitted into the process. This motion applies to all course instructors, including teaching assistants. In the rare case where a program’s accreditation standards specifically call for a single and particular (rather than general) type of evaluation of teaching, programs may, in the context of shared governance, develop holistic methods.

While the exact questions are not in final form, the following draft signals our intent and the topics we hope to understand better:

DRAFT TEMPLATE:

Please note that the university expects all courses, including Discovery and elective courses, to be rigorous and challenging.

Your year, major and (if desired) your expected grade

1. What was the modality of this course? Did you have any specific technological challenges? What technologies worked well for you? What additional training would be helpful to you as a student?

2. What did you learn in this course?

3. In what ways, if any, was what you learned in this course affected by its modality? Were there examples of your learning being reduced or challenged by COVID-required modalities? Were there examples of unexpected or unique opportunities for your learning due to COVID-required changes in modality? (now realize the above questions are covered by the two questions below, but leaving here for language options)
3. What did your instructor do in the context of the class format that was effective in helping you master the material? You may wish to choose a class session that was most inspiring and discuss why.
4. What was an ineffective practice, and why? You may wish to choose a class session that you found less successful than others and explain.
5. What practices did you experience in other classes that you think would be helpful in this one?
6. Did you find that learning with and from peers was reduced or enhanced?
7. Were you able to more or less successfully manage out-of-class issues and challenges due to the course’s modality?
8. Were there parts of the course modality or instruction that either enhanced or reduced your ability to learn and succeed in the course? What were they, and why?

Lisa’s presentation is available in the form of her PowerPoint presentation that appears as Appendix VIII.1

The floor was opened for some brief comments.

One COLSA senator pointed out that for the spring semester his students really appreciated that they had a chance to complete an evaluation of teaching.

A COLA senator asked how we would be able to encourage students to answer open ended questions given her experience when she offers them, many students choose not to answer. Lisa pointed out the response rates for the current evaluation tool is also not especially high. She suggested that a better response rate would benefit from questions that are meaningful and also from training. There is a need to retrain ourselves and our academic community about how to talk about what we do well and what we might do better. This is a culture change moment that we really need to take advantage of right now.

The motion will lay over until the next Senate meeting.

Lisa asked that senators send any questions or concerns to her about this motion before the next meeting so that the committee can be more efficient in addressing concerns.

IX. New Business - There was no new business.

X. Adjournment - The meeting was adjourned at approximate 5:05 PM
FACULTY SENATE ACADEMIC PROGRAM MOTION
ON
Replacing Course Evaluations for AY 2020-21

Spring Motion on Student Evaluations of Teaching
(March 23, 2020)

• Student evaluations of teaching were suspended.

• Faculty could choose to opt in

• These evaluations could not be used in assessments for renewal or promotion and tenure decisions UNLESS faculty member asks for them to be admitted.

• Faculty were encouraged to create their own course survey and a Qualtrics example was provided.

• Accreditors gave higher education broad leeway in suspending evaluations of teaching for spring 2020.
WHAT WE LOOKED AT?

- Surveyed faculty;
- Gathered information from the Spring Planning Committee about AT’s survey of faculty;
- Gathered information from associate deans about accreditation requirements;
- Confirmed the Senate’s authority over the format of evaluating teaching, which includes responsibility for ensuring that accreditation requirements are met;
- Affirmed that we would like to know about the fall experience of our students;
- Confirmed the dates for informing IT of any changes to be made (October 30);
- Placed this work in the context of the APC’s other charge, to design a roadmap for updating (if necessary) and designing a road map for creating and implementing new student surveys of teaching. An overhaul of the course evaluation process is long overdue; we need to move forward on the recommendations of the 2017 Committee. We would like to move swiftly on that, with the goal of beginning that process this year and implementing a new structure no later than Spring 2022.

Survey of faculty – October 2020
# of Responses:

- 70% of faculty who took the survey want to see a continuation of last year’s motion to suspend student evaluations through the academic year 2020/2021 for tenure, retention and promotion, with an opt in from faculty if they choose.
Survey of faculty - October 2020

Themes from “long term” survey question

• Evaluations should not be used at all for promotion related activity, but rather a way for instructors to improve their pedagogy. They should more accurately reflect student learning and teaching effectiveness in terms of course goals and objectives and insights should be gathered on student learning outcomes with fewer quantitative measures that can be unfairly based on personal opinions or recency bias.

• Peer evaluations of teaching should hold higher weight than student evaluations

• Student evaluations for teaching should be based on research showing what works/doesn’t especially as it relates to disadvantages to women and people of color that are inherently built into surveys like this. Literature/research exists proving this point and that should be used for any future roadmap.

• Include questions related to all modalities including online and multi-modal, questions on use of technology as it relates to these different modes.

• We should stay in the opt-in mode indefinitely until the pandemic has ended, all while looking to revise and reshape the instrument.

Discussion with Associate Deans, the Provost’s Office, and other stakeholders

• Accreditation requirements: spring accommodations no longer in place

• Student concerns: desire to understand the student experience

• Need to better understand the impact of specific technologies and formats on student learning

• Opportunity for formative data for Spring 2021

• Context of changing the evaluations, following review and implementation of 2017 Report

Principles guiding surveys for AY 2020-2021

• Open-ended responses (3 types: general; format specific; discipline-based) to be designed in conjunction with departmental needs

• Designed for formative purposes

• When paired with holistic and peer review, sufficient for accreditation

• Not to be used for evaluation, P&T, appointment unless faculty requests it; recommend using holistic and peer review instead.

• Faculty can instead opt-in to the pre-Spring 2020 evaluations if they choose
Guiding principles statement

- We affirm that students should have an opportunity to speak to their academic experience; and to do so in a way that respects their efforts and the desire to improve the collective student experience in the future.

- We know that all faculty seek and appreciate student input to improve the academic experience and to ensure that COVID conditions do not unduly disrupt student learning.

- We also know that accredited programs have standards that specifically call for an evaluation of teaching. While many accreditation organizations suspended their rules for the spring of 2020, they have now returned to expecting the standard to be met. It is essential that we ensure that the University can aggregate information in a way that both meets our accrediting needs and recognizes the unique situation that faculty are encountering.

- We recognize the opportunity to collect information that can improve UNH’s delivery of remote/distance education for those individuals and programs that are or are considering going on-line.

- We realize that some instructors may wish to use the university’s pre-COVID evaluation system. We recommend that there be an opt-in mechanism for faculty to do so through their chair and departmental or college administrator.

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Two-Part Motion on Student Evaluations of Teaching for AY 2020-2021

1) Suspend the “usual” Pre-Spring 2020 evaluations

2) Create a survey designed to solicit feedback on the modalities, pedagogies, effectiveness of the COVID adjustments

BECAUSE

- While the pre-Spring 2020 evaluations are inappropriate to the moment, neither is it appropriate to have no method of collecting student feedback.

- The pre-Spring 2020 course evaluations were problematic even prior to the pandemic.

- Senate motion MOTION # XXIV- M10 on Student Evaluations of Teaching for Spring 2020 suspended them; the conditions that led to that suspension have not changed.

- The APC is proceeding with a charge to develop a roadmap to implement new course evaluations.

- In the meantime, and under the current conditions, we need a method of surveying students.

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NEXT STEPS should the motion pass

- Work with CEITL, colleagues, to design questions;

- Faculty to distribute anonymous Qualtrics survey;

- APC fast-tracks a motion delineating a roadmap for new course evaluations, to be brought to the Senate, and with work to begin, in Spring 2021.