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

Faculty Senate

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Meeting called to order at 3:10 PM on April 19, 2021, via ZOOM

MINUTES SUMMARY

I. Roll: The following senator was absent: Bartow, Caron, Deen, Herold, Innis, Knowles, Shannon, and Zaimes. The following senators were excused: Colleran, Li, Mitchell. The following were guests: Wayne Jones, Kate Ziemer, Scott Lapinski, Nicky Gullace, and Scott Smith.

II. Call to order: The Senate chair, Erin Sharp, reminded the Senate about the following protocols. Meetings of the Faculty Senate are recorded to aid in the preparation of meeting minutes. Senators should use the Raise hand feature in Zoom to ask to speak. All participants are asked to refrain from using the chat feature.

Erin introduced Michael Blackman, the new Dean of Students, and welcomed him to observe the meeting.

III. Remarks by and questions to the provost – The provost, Wayne Jones, shared the following remarks and took questions:

- Wayne shared an update on the COVID-19 vaccine clinic being held on campus today, which was made available to both in-state and out-of-state students. There has been a strong turnout. All are grateful to the UNH nursing students and others who are helping to vaccinate. It is expected that when the number of vaccines administered on campus, over 6000, is added to the number of people who have already had COVID-19, that will amount to over 65% of our UNH population that has protection. This doesn’t include the number of people who have been vaccinated off-campus. The goal is to get above the 80% threshold to feel that we are in a strong position.

A senator from MCBS pointed out that there does appear to be a different level of protection for people who receive the vaccine compared to people who were previously infected with COVID-19 in the past year. Those that were infected are not necessarily guaranteed to have immunity anywhere from three to six months after infection. Therefore, it may not be useful to count previously infected people in the count of the protected population on campus.

Wayne shared that because of our in-house testing program, UNH has the data to be able to identify when students, faculty, and staff get reinfectected. At this point, the rate is small with less than 1% of the population getting reinfectected after previously testing positive for COVID. Nevertheless, the best advice is for all, including those who have had COVID, to get the vaccine.

- Wayne shared that the verdict in the jury trial of Derek Chauvin in connection with the death of George Floyd is expected this week. This traumatic event has had an impact on students and the trial verdict is expected to affect students. The Office of Student Life along with a small group of faculty created a 2-page document to help prepare faculty and staff to support students in the classroom and in
other interactions. It should be distributed soon. The provost also encouraged faculty to reach out to Kenneth Holmes and the Student Life team for any additional information or assistance.

IV. Remarks by and questions to Scott Lapinski, Director, UNH Student Accessibility Services

Scott shared a presentation about flexibility agreements and what these agreements mean for students and faculty. He explained that this is a new process within SAS and this kind of process is being used in universities throughout the country. The process is being piloted this spring and it is a work in progress. The process is already changing in response to the pilot and is expected to change more as more feedback is received.

Scott explained that there is a need for flexibility agreements, particularly in the areas of attendance and around deadlines, and that these flexibility agreements are designed to be available for students who are approved for this kind of accommodation. Accommodation best practices are shifting to collaborative approaches. Therefore, SAS and faculty need to be working together and this is why flexibility agreements are needed.

Scott described the program in a series of PPT slides (Appendix IV).

Following the presentation, Scott offered to take questions:

Erin Sharp thanked Scott for the presentation and asked when the program is expected to be rolled out.

Scott explained that the goal is to start the program in the fall in a more widespread way. This will allow for time over the summer to implement it. He said that some questions have been raised about the old language in accommodation letters. Some of that language can’t be changed and that leads to questions about whether a student’s accommodation space has been changed. The good news is that if you create an agreement with this process, that is the flexibility that students have for a class.

Some faculty have asked about using this new process for their courses earlier than the fall. Scott said that the SAS office is happy to work with anyone who wants to do this in advance. The instructor can put it on record, and any qualifying student who comes to SAS about that course and flexibility arrangements can easily be set up.

Scott clarified that the flexibility information is completed at the course level but shared individually with each student.

A COLA senator asked if this process would require the instructor to talk to the student about their medical condition. Scott clarified that no information about the disability will be shared with instructors. All of the processing in terms of the disability piece is handled by the SAS office. Instructors will only be notified that a student requires flexibility.

A CEPS senator pointed out that he teaches lectures, recitations, and labs. The accommodations for each will have to be different and this form may make that complicated. Also, in his experience, on more than one occasion when attempting to work out an accommodation, it didn’t seem possible to accommodate what the student was requesting. But, in conversation with the student, there was an approach that was able to be worked out. He is concerned that these solutions that have been found through conversation will get lost in this bureaucratic process. Scott responded that he has heard this
concern. The goal is not to take away from a student conversation. The goal is to try to identify the best flexibility options ahead of time. If the flexibility changes or there's a better arrangement, there can definitely be a conversation. Likewise, if the situation involves a complicated course for which it would be easier to talk through accommodations, that can be discussed.

Scott explained that part of the goal is to structure what that conversation needs to be from the OCR (Office of Civil Rights) standpoint and the overall kind of accommodation standpoint. What are the kinds of things to consider? What are the kinds of things that you might want to look at? Scott said that this is not about trying to take away from any conversations between students and instructors. This is really to get that baseline understanding of what flexibility is possible in that course.

Another CEPS senator shared that she teaches a lab course. She said that developing flexibility options for lab courses can be a little bit dicey because she is in a position of deciding for the lab TA. The TA contracts define the number of hours per week that they work. She would be putting the TA in a position of having to work more hours to help a student with a flexibility arrangement. Scott responded that these agreements have been very helpful in the past because they ensure that the TA and the instructor are on the same page and that the TA understands what the requirements are. Therefore, the flexibility agreement can be helpful. Scott suggested a further offline conversation about this.

A COLA senator asked whether it will remain the case that accommodations of flexibility cannot be applied retroactively and that students need to have a request for flexibility ahead of time. Scott replied that this is absolutely the case. He said that there is usually a point about a third of the way through the semester when there is an assessment about whether the agreement is applicable anymore and whether the need for flexibility must be clarified. This is complicated for SAS, especially since each student is taking four or five classes. The hope is that this new process will help to provide some consistency. The students who have these accommodations are figuring this out every single time and in every single class. He said that the goal is to help those students and help instructors to put the pieces together and be more proactive about flexibility. But it is complicated.

A COLSA senator asked if he were to provide a flexibility document to SAS for his course, is that document applied in a way that all students get the same accommodations, or is SAS tweaking that document and then applying it to specific scenarios for each individual student depending on what their needs are?

Scott explained that there are different approaches in the field about how this is done. Overall, the main approach is that faculty members speak to the essential requirements of their course. And then the students need to meet those requirements. So, it's not tailored to each individual student and their needs. It is, instead, about what is available in that course.

Another COLSA senator asked if a SAS accommodation is defined in advance whether that accommodation needs to be offered to all students in the course? He pointed out that his syllabus already reflects what is absolutely necessary to get through the course. Scott responded that there may be cases where additional flexibility is just not available. This process is only for very specific students who qualify for a particular accommodation. This may apply to about 50 students on campus. This is a very limited set of students who have fairly severe conditions that are very unpredictable. We want to make sure the student is engaging in the course as any other student would. However, if they do have those needs that are unpredictable and severe then our OCR mandate requires us to explore flexibility. Some universities might do this review on an individual case-by-case
basis. However, most of the field is working toward identifying this at the course level with SAS offering it only for approved students.

**Erin Sharp**, the Senate chair, thanked Scott for the important work he and his team are doing. Scott offered to talk further with faculty about any questions, comments, or concerns about the process or a particular course. As well, he is available to talk to departments.

V. Remarks by and questions to the chair:

- Erin shared that the Senate will meet again on May 3 and May 10 before the semester ends. Any committee motions must be presented by May 3 if they are to be voted on during this Senate session.

Erin invited Jim Connell, the Senate parliamentarian, to explain what happens with open motions when there is no time remaining for the Senate session. Jim shared that in standard parliamentary practice any open motions die with the session. A motion might be offered to postpone a motion to the next session, but one session can't bind the next session. That is explicit in Robert's Rules of Order. So, in some sense that would be more symbolic and would be a recommendation. In fact, the chair might actually rule it out of order because of that. A motion can certainly be reintroduced at the next session.

VI. Discussion of Discovery Review Committee (DRC) motion - Erin reminded the group that the Discovery Review Committee recommendation is on the floor currently. She said that in the recent discussion about a proposed amendment it became clear there were still some big questions remaining about the intention of the science category in the proposal. The Agenda Committee met on Friday to consider a way forward with the DRC proposal and developed some motions to help the Senate move forward

_Discussion followed:_

**COLSA Senator 1**: This is a procedural question. Are the motions that are going to be presented by the Agenda Committee replacing the motion that is already on the floor?

**Erin**: Yes, they are procedural motions. And if they don't pass, we go straight back to the motion and amendment that are on the floor.

**COLSA Senator 1**: Is that possible under the rules of the senate?

**Jim Connell**: There is a precedent of motions. You cannot put in something lower in order when there is an amendment pending. But you can put in other things. For example, a motion for the previous question is a subsidiary motion. There are other things you can do. So, there's a very well-defined hierarchy as to what takes precedence, with it being partly the least important taking precedence in some ways, but also motions that resolve issues taking precedence. Does that help or did I just make it more complicated?

**COLSA Senator 1**: I understand. My concern was that our original motion is respected and is considered and not replaced. And it just sounds like this is helping to organize things.

**Erin**: We either need to move forward and vote on amendments to get the DRC recommendations up for a vote or we need to move on to the list of other motions that we have going on. We have to make a decision as a Senate. Are we going to continue to work through this process with the DRC
recommendations or are we going to back off of the process and focus on other motions? The senate can decide to do either and we will move forward in either direction.

Erin presented the following motion:

Motion to Recommit and Create a New Ad Hoc Committee

The Faculty Senate is grateful to the Discovery Review Committee for taking on the task of reviewing the state of our general education program in 2019 and for their recommendations to improve the current program. The DRC process was interrupted by a global pandemic, which continues, and the initial DRC recommendations were revised to respond to calls for greater emphasis on diversity and inclusion. The context at UNH has changed significantly since the DRC process began in 2019; therefore, the Faculty Senate instructs the Agenda Committee to form an ad hoc committee to reassess the DRC recommendations to UNH’s general education curriculum. The Agenda Committee will draft the parameters for committee membership and the specific committee goals and timeline and share these with the Senate for approval.

Kevin Healey, Vice Chair: Essentially what this is saying is that given any number of circumstances or contextual items - the pending motions that the senate wants to address this semester, pressures for time during the session, potential changes to the budget model, the pandemic context, and given some ambiguities as Erin mentioned with regard to the specifics of the proposal itself - it may make sense to take the DRC proposal and recommit it to an ad hoc committee. And then the Senate would decide what this committee would be specifically tasked with doing. That could mean starting from scratch or it could mean reassessing or clarifying issues with regard to the DRC proposal based on our recent conversations. We would discuss that as a full Senate and decide how to charge this committee if this motion were to be passed.

Jim Connell: When the motion is recommitted, any amendments go with it. Also, there can only be one motion on the floor at a time.

Erin: I do feel discouraged a bit that we haven’t moved forward. I also want us to remember that this current session of the senate met all summer long, which never happens. The Agenda Committee met every single week this summer and we have faced planning for a global pandemic impacting our students. So, I just want to remind us of what we have accomplished this year.

Kevin: I would just reiterate that during discussions about this in an Agenda Committee meeting my feeling was that if the Senate were to pass this motion and take the DRC proposal and recommit it to a new ad hoc committee, I would see that as part of an ongoing process. In other words, this isn't a failure of our efforts to revise the general education curriculum but that this is probably the most efficient process we could engage in right now, given the issues that had been raised over the last couple of weeks and given the limited amount of time that we have. Again, the Senate could decide how to charge this committee about how to move forward. That would still be open for debate.

Erin: I want to clarify. This does not need to be seconded because it came from the Agenda Committee.

COLA Senator 1: I hope I'm not speaking out of order because I'm assuming this is a motion of substitution that would replace the motion on the floor. And if that is the case, the members of the
Agenda Committee already know my position, that I am opposed to this motion for two reasons. The first is that I think we should work through our discussions and our disagreements about the various amendments to the current DRC motion on the floor. I don't think that we have more important business than that. And I think we can clarify whatever confusion there might be and we should go through them.

My second point of opposition to this is that I do not think it is appropriate to send this back to a committee. As I explained to the Agenda Committee, I do not think we will get a different result if we send this back to a different committee. We will not get a report that will be accepted by the Senate. And so, I think we need a different process for changing the general education requirements if we are going to do that and I think that process should involve motions brought from the floor by individual senators to change the current composition of our Discovery Program.

So for those two reasons, I'm going to vote against this motion to substitute.

**Jim Connell:** Last time, we had on the Senate floor what the Agenda Committee believed would be the simplest and most straightforward amendment that could be brought to the main motion. Boy, were we wrong? Talk about best-laid plans. We were totally blindsided really because we didn't understand the science and science literacy category. And we're asking students to take two of these courses. Clearly, physical and biological sciences are certainly in this. But we're not really sure what else is in there. Is computer science? Yes? No? Maybe? If yes, doesn't that mean that a student can take two computer science courses and never take a natural science course? I mean, that appears to be the case in some places. If you look at the document, there are bits and pieces of it in different places. I mean, this is two out of nine courses and it's an important part and we cannot tell the Senate what's in there. Okay? Now, that makes it very hard to deal with an amendment to that part of the report. We don't quite know what we're voting for and against. And that's a serious procedural issue.

We could pass amendments that would fix this on the floor, eventually. Normally though, that is why we have committees. So just on that basis, I think this is something we should give serious consideration to.

Other amendments are likely to come up. I also wonder what other problems lie in wait. Even assuming there are no landmines, those are going to take a lot of time because they're not trivial. And the one thing I think everyone in the Senate absolutely agrees with is that this is potentially the most important thing we're going to be doing this session. We have had Discovery for over a decade and whatever we do now is going to continue probably for another decade.

**Erin:** As you know, the Agenda Committee helped put together a lot of materials to communicate the DRC recommendations to our colleagues. And I will totally admit that as I put together those documents, I thought that the sciences were just physical and biological. It may be that we only charge a committee to just solve that one problem, that we decide that we just need clarification about what exactly each of these categories entails. But I thought there were no changes to that science category and I was pretty intimately involved in trying to help communicate the changes. I think that it is really a critical point. And it may be that we just decide we need clarification. And then we can consider this more thoughtfully.

**Jim:** I just wanted to finish and say that I hate sending this back to a committee. There's a lot I like in the proposal, like the DEI course, the increased flexibility, and students being able to take more
advanced courses. I love that. But how can we vote on this when we really don't know what the science requirement is?

**COLA Senator 2:** I’m concerned that I may not be understanding what the motion on the floor is. I felt the motion on the floor was about an ad hoc committee to review the diversity requirement in particular. Is that the case?

**Kevin:** No. This is regarding the entire Discovery Review Committee proposal. There were two motions on the screen, and I only introduced and read the text of the first one.

**COLA Senator 2:** Sorry, I was looking ahead. I did want to ask what the relationship between this process of a new ad hoc committee and the ad hoc committee that has already been described in the DRC FAQ from a couple of months ago that specifically describes an ad hoc committee in the Senate to work on the SLOs for a new diversity proposal?

**Erin:** If the motion to endorse the DRC recommendations was passed, there was going to be a motion for implementation because we don't yet have the framework for that diversity, equity, and inclusion requirement. And that was going to be required no matter what, that additional work of a committee to develop that framework.

**COLSA Senator 2:** I want to go back to what Jim was saying just a little while ago. I think that the existing Discovery Program and the way that the physical and biological sciences requirements are structured there is, in fact, entirely clear as to what those requirements mean and what courses could fulfill them. They have been in place since the outset of the Discovery Program and have been understood throughout that time. So, I think if we do continue the discussion from last time and basically choose to just simply maintain the current Discovery Program stipulations for those two categories then there's nothing unclear about that whatsoever. It only becomes unclear when we make a change to it and then start talking about what the nature of that change might be. So that's just one point I wanted to make.

My other point was regarding the two proposals that ran on the screen a minute ago. It seems to me that the first one is a more far-reaching reconsideration of the Discovery review. But yet it seems to me that the first committee could not finalize anything until the committee on the diversity requirement has formulated their recommendations because it is going to depend on whether that diversity requirement is met by a standalone Discovery category or a stackable attribute. That will be the first domino really in restructuring the entire Discovery proposal. So, it seems to me that if we pass both of those the first group addressed by the first motion would be kind of sitting on their hands until the second group finished their job.

**Erin:** Well, at this point, it may be that that only the first motion passes. So, I guess I would wait. I apologize for putting both on the screen together. Senate could help determine how this would work. It may be that we don't need an additional committee. The Senate can determine that.

I also want to respond that we have modified the amendment that was on the floor. We will move straight back to that if a motion to recommit does not pass. We would move forward with the amendment on the floor.

**COLSA Senator 1:** Point of information. In the chat, there's some discussion about whether this motion is on the floor now for voting. Can you clarify that for all involved?
Kevin: I have put it on the floor. It is so moved, and we will need to vote on it. If the Senate votes against it, then we will go back to where we left off at the last meeting.

CEPS Senator 1: I'm in favor of this amendment. I don't know that the Discovery Committee's recommendations are really all that different than what we currently have other than we want to have DEI. The gen eds, if you will, are virtually unchanged in the 30 years since I was an undergrad at UNH. You look at other institution's general education requirements. What are we trying to achieve with them, right? What problem are we trying to solve by rewriting this? And I have not gotten a good feel for it. I understand some people's goals for the labs in physical sciences versus biological sciences. But what about when we talk about critical thinking skills? Where are those coming from? Wouldn't it be good that everybody has some technology background? Wouldn't it be good if everybody has something from the business school and understands finances? I don't think we've moved very far in a holistic direction.

That being said, I don't disagree with what [COLA Senator 1] said that the format that we had before with the committee is maybe not the right mechanism for addressing those issues. But I think we need to look at things more holistically and figure out what we want to do. And remember that the whole RCM and the funding of this are gone and everyone is trying to keep their fiefdom for having their little component. I think we need to try to look at it in terms of us as an institution as well as our competitors and when we look at our comparators are students going to those comparators and saying, “Well, I only need to take this many.” I know we don't always want to do what somebody else does. But I think we need to keep it in the back of our minds if our programs are so onerous that people choose to go somewhere else to get more flexibility.

Nicky Gullace, Faculty Director of the Discovery Program: I don't think we intended the science to be such a mystery. I think there are two courses of action the Senate could take on in the science area. One would be to say that the two science requirements must be limited to biological and physical science, as they were before but allow students to perhaps take two in one or two in the other, which produces savings for nursing and several of the engineering programs which would not have to take a course outside of physical or biological science, whichever one their discipline covered.

The second way the Senate could go on the sciences is the way I think we intended it to go when we revised these categories which was to create a more encompassing conception of science that did include technology and things like computer science. Our reason for that is we wanted to just see computer science students be allowed to fulfill some of their science in major. Actually, I would like to see them be able to fulfill all of it in-major. They may choose not to. But I'd like them to have that be a possibility for their department. Up until now, their department has been confined to offering ETS courses. Also, we had hoped that non-science majors might be able to take one of their science courses in something like computer programming, which many students have expressed an interest in.

So, yes, we did try to expand the notion of science. It was stated clearly on page 25 where we defined the two kinds of science that we would have - a biological science that included environmental science, and physical science that would include technology.

The Faculty Senate may reject that. It had not occurred to me that there would be faculty who were opposed to having technology included in there, but it would be a very simple amendment to go back to simply limiting our science categories to biological and physical as they were previously defined. And then the question would simply be whether or not the Senate wanted to require
students to take one of each as opposed to bundling two together, which again would be of great advantage to students in requirement-heavy majors. But I don't think this is a mystery. I don't think it was particularly unclear in our lengthy report and I think the decision is between really whether to include technology or not.

No one in our committee and nothing in any of our descriptions suggested that we were going to include political science or library science. And I've heard this from various places. Social science would go in the social science category. I understand if you choose to defer this onto the next committee, but I hope it is not because of a lack of clarity on what the science courses would or could require.

Scott Smith, Co-chair, Discovery Review Committee: Thank you all. And this very well may be the last thing I have to say about this. So, thank you for giving me a few seconds just to make a few points. I do want to mention that we had very specific charges that did not ask us to reinvent the entire system. So, we were working within a very structured process in which we basically were trying to find flexibility, but also to add the sort of things that the students and university wanted us to do and faculty as well. We had faculty involvement at the same time.

I do hope that if this goes back to another committee that [COLA Senator 1]'s warning is kept in mind about what are we expecting to have different. I really would like to know what can we do? Given the big structural problems that we have at this university of the majors that are very constricted in terms of their requirements. Now I'm not trying to criticize those majors, but that creates a tension that will not allow us to do everything. And therefore, in order to do something we have to then change something else. I just want to make sure that we all recognize that if we send this to another committee, they're going to be facing those very same tensions, the same difficulties of trying to come up with something that makes sense, that is holistic, and that can also be done within the strictures of what we actually have.

I think that one of the things we ought to be doing as a university is reevaluating whether or not the flexibility should come from the Discovery Program or if the majors need to reconsider whether or not they need absolutely every class. Because we oftentimes hear students complain about the Discovery Program being the problem and why they can't do X, Y, or Z when the major requirements are also there as well. I'm not saying we need to change them. I think we should at least go through the process of reassessing that.

Thank you all very much and good luck with your decision.

CEPS Senator 2: Thank you. I do think that the whole question should be thought from the ground up because we all want our students to get a good education and there's a consensus that that means a broad education. But I think in the 30 something years I've been here the consensus around what constitutes a broad education has been collapsing because of changes in technology and also because of changes in the social structure of the United States. And also changes within the disciplines. So, I think there needs to be a conversation about what the goal is. And I think rearranging the pieces on a board that's conceived ten years ago - but really 30 years ago or more since I think general education at UNH goes back to Evelyn Handler - is not the way of addressing the current reality.

I think that broad education is important, but I also think we don't want to alienate our students with Byzantine requirements that they don't see as well-motivated. And we also don't reap the benefit of broadness if we don't give them the chance to construct a coherent program. My experience on the
ground is that, generally, the Discovery Courses don't talk to one another in a way that leads to the kinds of intellectual conversations that makes somebody broadly educated in fact, and not just on paper.

**Kevin:** Thank you. To clarify so that we are clear - if the motion to recommit passes that does not necessarily mean that the ad hoc committee would be starting from the ground up. That would be a conversation as a senate that we would have to have after the motion to recommit passes, if it does pass, about to what extent are we reassessing. Erin mentioned we could decide that we just need to clarify a few things, bring it back, or we can have the kind of conversations that were just articulated. So, I'm just clarifying so people know what we're voting for.

**CEPS Senator 2:** If I can just clarify that my expression is my feelings about how the curriculum should work. It also is my analysis of why we're having such trouble coming to a consensus in the Senate. So, I'm both addressing what's happening locally and globally.

**COLSA Senator 1:** I'm going to support the motion for a couple of reasons, and I'll try to be brief. To me, curriculum is an iterative process and we've moved from the DRC’s initial report to a second report that made a large number of changes to the initial proposal. And we are moving towards something that I think people can agree on. I don't think that we are going to be able to move to that thing that everyone can agree on in the very short period of time that we have to deliberate on this issue. And I am very concerned about the general education program at UNH being decided on kind of a “well, we just need to get this done” sort of measure. And I think that there is plenty of time to do this decision-making carefully.

I understand that the DRC has put a lot of time and effort into this proposal. They've taken input. They've adjusted their proposal accordingly. And I think that this is the type of decision-making that requires a lot of iterations and a lot of give-and-take. And I would just make the point that science and technology education is a vital piece of this, and I think that there's a lot to be considered amongst the biological, physical, and technical sciences here that we need to take a look at. Because when I look at when our students graduate and the skill sets that they need to understand the world outside of UNH, I see different things coming from different universities that are our competitors in terms of what they require. And I don't want a student leaving without understanding certain biological aspects of science, certain physical aspects of science, and certain technical aspects of science. And the technical aspects of science have taken a hit here. With this proposal, there is one less requirement that's technical or science-oriented. There's a lot of flexibility that is being created at the expense of science education in terms of multiple disciplines.

I personally don't want a nurse to leave UNH without having a physical science class. Because I teach nursing students - I've taught nursing students my entire career - they need that perspective. Just the same as I don't want one of my microbiology students leaving UNH without having a physical science perspective. Okay, now, they get those perspectives through taking portions of their curriculum that are required for their major. Scott Smith brings up a very good point here in that the flexibility has to come from somewhere. And perhaps one of the things that we need to do is also consider the flexibility amongst the individual majors that have very high levels of requirements and ask those majors to consider whether there is some flexibility that you can afford your students to allow them to take these particular courses that we think are important for their general education. And I don't think that those conversations are going to happen within the next three weeks. I think that those are conversations that are going to happen over a much larger period. Thank you for your patience.
COLA Senator 2: This may again be a question rooted in my confusion about the process. Is there a reason why we aren’t just voting on the DRC proposal? At this point, it feels pretty clear that discussion of this motion is showing that people feel either they would vote in favor of the proposal or they would like to start again, in which case, why are we voting on this motion? I am genuinely confused.

Erin: That's a really important question. We actually have an amendment on the floor that created quite a bit of discussion and did not get closed. We can pull it back up. If we don't pass this, we will go straight back to the amendment. I can also say we have three other amendments that have been forwarded to me for discussion. So, unless somebody calls the question to vote on the full recommendations without considering any more amendments and that passes, then we know that at this point in the process we don't have enough time. We don't have enough time to go through deliberations of the amendments that are planned to come forward.

Jim: Just to be clear what we're doing here. There is a main motion on the floor which was to endorse and basically adopt in effect the DRC recommendations. And the idea always was that there could be amendments to that.

The one amendment was brought forth by Rose as it happened although there were some prepared ones to help move things along by the Agenda Committee. That is now pending against the main motion. This motion is to recommit the whole thing, which is to say the main motion with any other pending amendments, which would be Rose’s, to a committee to review it. So, if this passes, all of this moves to the ad hoc committee. If this passes, I believe that Kevin will bring a motion to form another ad hoc committee. Now, the exact charges for both of those committees or just the one have to be worked out.

COLA Senator 2: I guess my question is why vote for this motion and not just vote against the DRC proposal?

Jim: So, now if this fails, we go back to Rose's amendment. That has to be taken care of. Does it pass or fail? We're back to the main motion, at which point we know there are three more amendments that will be proposed unless, for example, we close all debate on it, in which case those would be excluded, but that would take a two-thirds vote. Does that help answer your question?

Kevin: In other words, Jim, you’re saying if we vote against the motion to recommit, we could very well get to a point where we're voting yes or no on the DRC proposal. But there's a big asterisk there. It has to do with whether people really want to introduce additional amendments or whether we can all agree that we do want to vote on the DRC with a yes or no. So, there are a lot of “ifs” in-between voting down the motion to recommit and actually voting on the DRC. Correct?

Jim: Yes. Because every senator has a right to bring an amendment unless the previous question has been passed, or unless we suspend the rules, both of which take two-thirds.

Kevin: But it's a question of what is the most efficient and effective path forward right now.

COLA Senator 2: I mean, I think it makes sense now. I would have liked to know what other motions people had for the main motion that we haven't been able to discuss at this point.
Erin: If we want to go forward with those and see those amendments, don't support the motion to recommit and we will continue the process as we were working it.

There were no additional comments.

The motion to recommit and to create a new ad hoc committee was put to a vote. The motion passed with 36 in favor, 19 opposed, and 2 abstentions.

Erin explained that the Agenda Committee will now draft, with input from the Senate, the membership and charges for this ad hoc committee.

Kevin Healey of the Agenda Committee presented a motion to create a new ad hoc committee on the diversity requirement as follows:

Motion to Create a New Ad Hoc Committee on Diversity Requirement

The Faculty Senate endorses the concept of adding a Diversity requirement to UNH’s general education curriculum; therefore, the Faculty Senate instructs the Agenda Committee to form an ad hoc committee to develop the framework, objectives, and student learning outcomes for this requirement. The Agenda Committee will draft the parameters for committee membership with the goal of being representative across colleges and will prioritize involvement of faculty with interest and expertise in the areas of diversity, equity, and inclusion, and the specific committee charges, which will include collaborating with the new ad hoc committee formed to reassess the DRC recommendations, and timeline and share these with the Senate for approval.

Jim Connell: If this motion passes, it affirms that the Senate has a desire to have some sort of diversity, equity, inclusion course or attribute in the Discovery Program. So, it is sort of a moral commitment, which I think the administration and certainly the students would appreciate. Second, it primes the pump so that when this all comes together, hopefully, next year the requirements are there, and also the Senate has recommendations because one of the things we've seen in these deliberations is that there have been valid questions as to the details of what form this course is going to take. So, it's trying to provide clarity when we ultimately come to vote upon a new Discovery Program. And finally, I guess the way to put it is that it is a parallel effort. And obviously, they have to coordinate, which is mentioned in the proposal.

Erin: I'd like to add that this work was going to be required regardless of what happened because the Discovery requirement needed the meat on the bones. It needed the framework created and the student learning outcomes for a Diversity requirement. This work was going to have to happen regardless in order to move it forward.

Jim: What we're trying to avoid is having the first ad hoc committee bring forward a Discovery program that's approved and then have to wait another year while the DEI aspects are ironed out, which is what we were going to be doing if we passed Discovery this year. I think that's a good way to look at it.

Kevin: If I can just restate it in my own words. We just passed a motion to recommit the DRC proposals, so we don't know what the charges yet are going to be for that committee, and therefore, we don't know how long it's going to take. But what this motion is saying is that we do know that we want
to address this question of equity and inclusion diversity through this course, and we need to get working on that immediately. That is another way of summarizing.

**COLA Senator 3:** I just wanted to clarify what you said when you were presenting your point of view, that the DEI requirement that we will be voting on is not specifically a standalone course or an attribute. That is also up in the air as far as what that requirement would be and also whether it would be US-specific or whether it would be broader and include global issues. It's just DEI in a very, very broad sense. And then we hash out the details later. Can you clarify that for me?

**Erin:** Yes. Senate is going to be involved in crafting the charges for that work and will be involved in approving what comes forward from that work. And I think a lot of the discussion we've had as a Senate so far will help inform that process.

**COLA Senator 3:** Can I follow up quickly? When it says that they are going to be looking for faculty members who are experts in the area of DEI, has that been clarified yet? What exactly is an expert in the area of DEI? It seems like we're back to this idea of what science means, and we're back to nitpicking terminology. But this idea hinges on a certain body of faculty. And there's going to be some faculty I think, who think of themselves in those terms, whereas others might not. I'm wondering how we even get to that point.

**Erin:** Yeah, I think that's an excellent question and that will be part of our forming the makeup of the committee. And in my humble opinion, anyone who is really interested and engaged in thinking about what this could look like should be involved. But what we don't want is a group that doesn't have any knowledge of what a diversity curriculum could look like, who has never thought about a course like this, doing the development. I can tell you that as I have requested membership for different committees, people who engage will certainly be encouraged to be a part.

**Jim:** The short answer is I don't qualify.

**CEPS Senator 2:** Diversity, equity, and inclusion are all values of mind, but none of them sound like subject matter categories. So, I'm not really sure, even vaguely, what the mandate really means. First of all, I would like clarification on that. I'd like to know whether it's necessary for meeting whatever that goal is to happen under the aegis of Discovery, whether it could be an independent thing that might be more flexible for the university where it doesn't have to wait for us to figure out the whole diversity. And I wonder whether there's some other name for it that actually sounds like a subject matter. Because I'm confused about what it all means. I imagine the public at large will be confused. If somebody said there should be a requirement to study African American culture, I understand that. That makes sense to me. I would have an idea about what would count as a course that met that requirement. But these words are very abstract.

**Erin:** So, if I can just respond to that. I personally feel strongly that we need to rise to the call of particularly our students, but also our own academic fields and integrate this into our general education. But we need people to form what that means, how that's defined, and what the learning outcomes are going to be. Thankfully, there are a lot of institutions we can look to for examples and guidance. But that is the work of this committee.

**Kevin:** I would just add that the statements from the Student Senate and also the work that the DRC did already offer plenty of fodder to work with in terms of giving some direction to this discussion about what this course would look like. I don't think it's starting entirely from scratch.
CEPS Senator 3: So just to clarify, I think it's very clear what this course might look like if it's based in a first-year experience. But I think there's a lot of debate of whether it is a stackable attribute If it is a broadly defined agenda of this committee who knows what they might come up with? It may be similar to or different than what this current class might be currently projecting.

Besides that, I was wondering if on the committee itself there will be representation by all the different colleges because I think that's really important. I think you’ve been hearing a lot through COLA faculty and various support of the vision of what has been proposed on the floor. But yet, there have been some challenges, especially by CEPS faculty where we really need more inclusivity of our disciplines, and more training of diversity within our disciplines. And that make-up might also reform or change how this is re-envisioned.

Erin: Yes. And one of our goals for any committee is to try to guarantee representation, particularly across colleges. So, I can't imagine a committee like this moving forward without representation from every college.

CEPS Senator 3: True. But to an earlier point, there are definitely CEPS faculty that are less trained in the areas of diversity compared to COLA faculty who teach this area. And that's part of one of our weaknesses and why we need specific discipline-specific treatments to embed that. And so, if that is the vision, I'd really appreciate it if we add it in there to ensure that all colleges are represented, not necessarily taking away from that statement but just to make sure that all colleges are represented.

Erin: And I think that's a good point. And I think there are definitely people in every college who have thought about these issues and would be interested in being engaged.

COLA Senator 4: I’m in Political Science. Although many of our courses deal with issues of race and ethnicity, I'm not sure any of us really are trained in this very strict sense. I'm just worried about who is qualified to do these courses. I mean, it would be one thing if we had Henry Louis Gates to teach a course on African-American history. I would be all for that but are we just avoiding having an African American Studies program with people who are specifically trained in this discipline or whether we're just having these fly by night, hey, I'm interested in this issue and I want to get into this. I mean, it just worries me because people are paying good money for these courses.

COLA Senator 5: I just want to point out that there has been a consensus in the Geography and Anthropology departments about the narrowness of this DEI definition as it is defined in our current DRC proposal. And I want to point out that narrowing the entire DEI as an American-centric issue is both pedagogically unproductive and factually wrong. And I want to give you just one example of this. Under our current proposal, there are actually a number of courses that are offered in both departments which will not qualify for this DEI label, but actually contribute a lot to what this label will mean and should mean. Now let me give you one example from my colleagues. There has been a course called Geography of Sub-Saharan Africa offered by my colleague Solomon Maingi. That course covers the persistent consequences of colonialism and racism in Africa. But that course is not only about race and it is not only about racial diversity. That course also covers the political, economic, and social inequalities on that continent. Now I want to point out that those processes are the same or in parallel to the processes that we are experiencing in the US. They are both sides of the same coin. They are the consequence of the process, the same process that brought millions of African slaves to the Americas. This is an apparent irony. If this proposal passes, then his course will not qualify because it's not about the US. And it's not only about race. And many other courses will not qualify for the same reason. I just want to bring up this apparent irony to the Senate to think about what the current definition of DEI would mean for other courses.
Erin: I think all of these great discussions about what a course like this should look like can happen once we have a commitment to doing that work in the Senate.

Kevin: I just have to say I agree with [COLA Senator 5] very strongly, but I think that the wording of this motion gives the kind of flexibility that he is looking for. And I totally agree. My position on the recommended course on diversity is that you can't even do a course, even if it was on US history, without talking about the transnational slave trade, the history of colonialism, and all of that is global in scope. So, I totally agree. And I would hope that this motion is already written in such a way that it would absolutely bring the courses that you're talking about to the table and that they would indeed qualify for this requirement. So, I think this motion is consistent with the concerns that you're raising.

Erin: I totally agree. This would be the work of this committee - defining what courses could fall under a requirement even if they are not called diversity equity inclusion, but they are focused on this content area.

COLA Senator 1: I just wanted to say quickly there has been a committee in COLA working with Kabria Baumgartner in the COLA Dean’s office on all of the issues, many of which have come up in the conversation today as well as many others that have come up within the last several years. I hope that that senate committee would be in conversation with them. I think they would have a great deal to offer.

Erin: Absolutely.

CEPS Senator 1: I'm taking a DEI class right now. And the focus from everything I've heard from everyone for DEI is pretty much race. There's a lot of other diversity issues. One of them being neurodiversity. And I want to make sure that we are not so focused on the trends of today that we're missing out on more areas that we really need to consider.

Erin: I'm going to stop there and just say that one of the things that I also have talked with Dr. Petty and Kate Ziemer about is that there are a lot of courses on our campus right now that students can access in these critical areas. One of the suggestions that we've made is having some way to help point students to those courses now so that they understand that in the fall there is a wide range of courses about culture and inclusion and diversity in a very wide and broad sense. I know that that list is being collected and I'll follow up. So many people are already teaching really powerful and important courses in these areas. And we need to make sure our students know that and know how to find them.

Erin proposed that the motion be put to a vote.

There was a discussion about whether the motion needed to layover. Jim Connell explained that this is a procedural vote to form a committee and therefore doesn’t require to layover. However, given that the motion does endorse the concept of adding a diversity requirement, that could be considered a substantive aspect. A decision was made that the motion should layover until the next meeting.

VII. Adjournment - The meeting was adjourned at approximately 5:00 PM.
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<th>Acronym</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Academic Affairs Committee (Faculty Senate standing committee)</td>
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<td>Agenda Committee of the Faculty Senate</td>
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<td>ASAC</td>
<td>Academic Standards &amp; Advising Committee</td>
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<td>Clinical, Contract, Lecturer, Extension, Alternative Security, Research faculty</td>
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<td>Center for Excellence &amp; Innovation in Teaching &amp; Learning</td>
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<td>Joint Strategic Management Board (Navitas review)</td>
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<td>Library Committee (Faculty Senate standing committee)</td>
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<td>SAC</td>
<td>Space Allocation and Renewal Committee</td>
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<td>University Curriculum &amp; Academic Policies Committee (FS permanent committee)</td>
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<td>Vice President for Finance and Administration</td>
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APPENDIX IV
Slides and background documents presented by Scott Lapinski

Flexibility Agreements
SCOTT LAPINSKI, PH.D., M.ED.
DIRECTOR OF STUDENT ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES

What are Flexibility Agreement?

Flexibility agreements are documents that are shared with students that detail the potential flexibility within a course
- Still require student communication through the semester
- Can still be changed as course requirements change

Flexibility determined by essential course requirements
Same agreement shared with any student with the specific accommodation in the course

UNH Attendance and Assignment Flexibility Agreement
Fall 2021

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Why Do We Need Flexibility Agreements?

Accessibility Office best practices are shifting to increased collaboration

Need for consistency in how flexibility is addressed across campus
  - Flexibility based on essential requirements
  - Flexibility communicated proactively (or as close as possible)
  - Flexibility based on essential course requirements

We need to develop processes that ensure equity
  - Cannot provide one approved student with flexibility and refuse another

How Will Flexibility Agreements Work?

SAS STEPS
1. SAS approves the student for the accommodation through the interactive process
2. SAS reaches out to the faculty member
   - Link to the form
   - Link to additional supportive information
3. Faculty completes the form and SAS reviews the information
4. SAS creates a first draft of the agreement
5. Faculty affirms the agreement
6. SAS shares it with the student

FACULTY STEPS
1. Reflect on essential requirements for your course
2. Complete the flexibility agreement form (this will be shared with you via email)
3. SAS will share your responses with the student(s)
4. SAS will facilitate additional conversation about the agreement
Example of a Student

STUDENT A

Complicated presentation of Lyme Disease
Student’s condition can include brain fog, fatigue, general weakness, and severe pain
Student has frequent treatments and physical therapy sessions
Student is currently a junior and has plans to graduate on time

WHY FLEXIBILITY?

Uncertainty of their condition
• Sudden changes
• Suddenly incapacitated for a day
Need for planning ahead
Need for proactive communication
Might need to meet essential requirements in different ways

Examples of Flexibility Language

ATTENDANCE FLEXIBILITY

As part of this agreement, the student can miss 3 additional classes. If the student does miss, they are still required to complete the weekly activities. It should be noted, however, that weekly attendance is critical to success in the course. Even participating remotely, is much preferred to missing a class.

In the case of an absence, the professor should be notified anytime before the beginning of the class.

ASSIGNMENT FLEXIBILITY

As part of this agreement, the student can ask for additional flexibility on terminology quizzes, module review questions, and the narrative medicine assignment. The exact flexibility available varies depend on the assignment, so the student is encouraged to connect with the professor as soon as flexibility is needed to make any additional arrangements. Though there can be flexibility with these areas, it is highly advisable that the student still completes work as close to the initial deadlines as possible. These are designed to have the most value when completed near to their due date.

It should be noted that, as with the generally assignments requirements, extensions cannot be requested for content quizzes or the final exam. These should be taken at the scheduled times.
Some Frequently Asked Questions

Is any student with accommodations qualified for a flexibility agreement?

What if a student needs more flexibility than I can offer?

Is this just making things easier for some students?

What if a student does not communicate about their needs during the semester?

Can I just meet with each student instead of completing the form?

Can I use this flexibility agreement for students who have emergencies?

What happens if my course changes or I have to change the agreement?
What are Flexibility Agreements?

Flexibility agreements are the outcome of a new process being implemented by SAS to help ensure students and faculty are on the same page when it comes to the attendance and/or assignment deadline flexibility that is available within a course.

Flexibility agreements are approved for students with conditions that are severe and unpredictable. These students need to understand what flexibility exists in a class as soon as possible. This allows them to: understand essential requirements of a course, effectively engage in learning, plan for situations when their condition is more severe, and to more effectively communicate and work with professors.

The result of this process is an "agreement" that SAS shares with the student and faculty member. This agreement can then be referenced throughout the semester when the student requires additional flexibility. This agreement can also be shared with other students who are approved for this accommodation within the course.

Steps for Faculty

1. Reflect on essential requirements for your course
2. Complete the flexibility agreement form (this will be shared with you via email)
3. SAS will share your responses with the student(s)
4. SAS will facilitate additional conversations about the agreement
Frequently Asked Questions

Is any student with accommodations qualified for a flexibility agreement?
No. Not all students with disabilities are approved for flexibility agreements. SAS determines eligibility based on review of documentation as part of the interactive accommodations process. This accommodation is only approved when the student demonstrates that they have a specific need for flexibility based on their condition.

Is this just making things easier for some students?
No. All students are still expected to meet all essential requirements in your course. Students who have this accommodation might need to meet these requirements in different ways, but they are still expected to meet requirements. SAS can work with you to determine what flexibility might be appropriate in your course.

Can I just meet with each student instead of completing the form?
Yes, but SAS recommends you complete the form. The form was created to ensure consistency and to help SAS manage the volume of requests. You can, however, meet with the student individually to create an agreement. If you meet with the student, then you can communicate your agreement to SAS. SAS will then share this agreement with other students in the course who require the accommodation.

What happens if my course changes or I have to change the agreement?
Courses do often change. When this is the case, the faculty and student should discuss the changes, and inform SAS of any updates. It should be noted that essential requirements often do not change within a course.

What if a student needs more flexibility than I can offer?
All flexibility should be determined based on the essential requirements of your course. If you feel that a student would no longer meet essential requirements based on the flexibility they require, then you should talk with SAS about next steps. There are cases where students may need to consider other options, and SAS can help determine if that is appropriate.

What if a student does not communicate about their needs during the semester?
Students are required to communicate all requests for flexibility with faculty throughout the semester. The flexibility agreement can also contain information about your communication requirements. Accommodations cannot be granted retroactively, so communication is critical.

Can I use this flexibility agreement for students who have emergencies?
You can use the agreement for other students (emergencies, death in the family, etc.) if you would like. SAS will only share this agreement with qualified students in your course, but you can use the agreement to determine flexibility for other students as well. Since it is based on essential requirements, this would not be a problem. SAS can help determine if it would be appropriate.

Contact Us
Student Accessibility Services
Phone: (603) 862-2607 E-mail: SAS.office@unh.edu
https://www.unh.edu/studentaccessibility