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UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
2017-18 FACULTY SENATE XXII

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

Meeting called to order at 3:11 p.m. on September 25, 2017 MINUTES SUMMARY

I. Roll – The following senators were absent: Burger, Gardner, Gupta, Herold, Lockwood, Onosko, Roth, Salyer, Simos, Theimer, and Wake. Bstieler, Golomski, Minocha, Subrena Smith, Swift, and Taylor were excused. Nancy Targett was a guest.

II. Remarks by and questions to the provost – The provost began her remarks by saying that there is no greater challenge we are facing as a university community than the issues of diversity and campus climate. The President’s Task Force on Campus Climate has met several times already this semester. The provost acknowledged the faculty representative to the task force, who also serves as a faculty senator. There are seven students on the task force, as well. The original plan of the co-chairs of the task force was to gather information from various groups on campus and use that baseline information as a jumping off point for creating a plan of action. The provost had hoped to have summative information to share in January, but she said that it is clear to her that students of color on campus still do not feel safe, despite current efforts to effect change. She feels strongly that we need to do something immediate and visible to help change the current atmosphere. To that end, the task force is shifting its focus to a shorter-term agenda.

The provost said that a recent session with the Office of Multicultural Student Affairs (OMSA) and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) drew an audience of about four hundred people. In that meeting, Nancy said, students accused the president’s task force of deflecting issues and being ineffective. The provost went on to say that she has heard of other members of the university community, including faculty, making similar statements. The provost asserted that she believes completely in the purpose and goals of the task force, and that it is not a sham. She asserted that long term and short term goals can be set, and met, which can bring our campus community closer together and address the issues we are facing. She said it is her intent to address issues head on and personally, and that she is willing and anxious to consider suggestions from others, and to discuss concerns face to face. She noted that while UNH has been ranked as the safest college campus in the country, the composite score used for that ranking may not reflect how some students feel.

She said there is a cognitive dissonance within the broader discussion of these issues, noting that every one of the hundreds of members of the community she has spoken to over the past several months has expressed genuine concern about these issues, and yet there are still students who also genuinely feel unsafe in our community. We need to figure out what is going on that both of these truths can coexist.

The faculty representative on the task force noted that students and faculty of color may anticipate the impotence of committees in general, but she asserted that the task force is working hard and holding one another accountable. She asked faculty to feel free to share ideas regarding what we, as faculty, can do to help people of color to feel more safe on our campuses. She suggested small or large actionable items, whether addressing the issue in the short- or long-term.

A senator reported that his high-school age daughter has friends who report eliminating UNH as an educational option because of the diversity issues here. He encouraged the task force to include enrollment issues into their conversations. The provost agreed that this is an important issue, and pointed out that UNH is not unique in having to deal with this right now.

A senator asked if those students who report feeling unsafe can identify specific places or times of day where and when they feel less safe than others. The senator suggested that faculty might commit to establishing a more visible presence on campus in an effort to support and provide a greater sense of security for our students of color. The dean of student's "Red Coat" program was referenced as an example of that kind of increased faculty visibility.

The provost responded that students have reported being the targets of verbal assaults from people in moving cars. She noted that it is hard to know if the offenders are even members of the UNH community.

A senator referenced a letter included in the September 21, 2017 edition of The New Hampshire from a student urging the university to add religious minority holidays to the Christian-based UNH calendar. The student noted that even if these days cannot be declared as campus holidays, their placement on the calendar will raise the visibility of these minorities in our community. It was noted that some years ago, the administration committed to not scheduling Homecoming on the Jewish High Holy Days, and yet this year that conflict exists again. The provost said that the calendar is being changed, and that it will reflect such holidays going forward. She said that actions are actually being taken to correct this error, but noted that a complete overhaul of the calendar is an extensive, \$100K project. She said she is not trying to excuse the error.

A senator asked if it would be beneficial for faculty to stop by offices such as OMSA, to offer support to students and faculty of color, noting that some faculty may find their classes to be comparatively homogeneous and may have to seek more proactive ways to engage in meaningful ways with a more diverse community. She asked if it's possible to engage in such a way that does not appear alarming or disingenuous.

The provost said that she will take all of these ideas and comments back to the task force and share their answers in the future. She did alert the senate members that members of the community should not declare themselves "allies" to minority groups, but that those groups reserve the right to identify their own allies. The provost mentioned the idea of finding a way to wear some kind of outward symbol to show solidarity and support, but said she is unsure how such a gesture might be received by OMSA.

A senator asked why there are not more faculty on the president's task force, particularly faculty with expertise in the issues being addressed. The provost responded that originally, the intent was to have a task force of about fifteen people, but that number grew to the current twenty-five. She said that perhaps an advisory group to the task force could provide additional insights. A senator noted that the College of Liberal Arts has a Race and Ethnic Studies minor with at least forty faculty engaged in the very topics the task force is reviewing, which would be a good resource for the task force.

The provost said that sometime in mid October there will be a panel discussion by our law school faculty on free speech. She said the event will be widely advertised and she hopes it will be well attended. She said that subsequently, the attorney general and others may be invited to join in similar discussions.

The chair thanked the provost for her time.

III. Remarks by and questions to the chair – The chair announced that the Senate meeting schedule is currently a little light. The Agenda Committee is working to bring certain administrators in to Senate meetings for discussions through the fall. With few motions coming forward right now, the Agenda Committee felt it might be useful to cancel the October 9 Senate meeting and turn that time over to the standing Senate committees to use as they see fit to move forward on their assigned charges. Hopefully with three committee meetings in a row, sufficient progress can be made on those charges that some committees may have reports or motions to bring before the Senate later this fall and into the early spring semester.

The chair also said the Agenda Committee is seeking brief updates from one or two standing committees at each Senate meeting going forward, to keep the Senate informed and to illuminate areas of overlap between committees that might spark collaboration.

Dan said that the listening sessions for the presidential hiring committee have been completed. He noted that there has been a rumor that the hiring firm is seeking a candidate in the field of business, but Dan dismissed that as unfounded.

IV. Approval of the Senate minutes from September 11, 2017 – It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes of the September 11, 2017 meeting of the Senate. One correction was suggested in Item V. Thus adjusted, the minutes were approved unanimously with 2 abstentions.

V. Discussion and vote on motion to create a policy for curtailed operations make-up day – The chair turned time over to Dante Scala, who reviewed the motion brought before the Senate two weeks ago to create a policy for a make-up day when curtailed operations create multiple missed days for classes. Dante noted that an additional change has been made since our last meeting. At that time, a senator suggested combining Items 1.b and 1.c, calling them redundant. The Agenda Committee reviewed the request, and chose to remove 1.b altogether, and renaming 1.c, which the committee submits is not a substantial change. The amended motion reads:

Rationale: *The Faculty Senate wishes to create a formal, routine process by which makeup class days are added to the academic calendar during spring semesters in which there are frequent full class day curtailments. Such a process would reduce uncertainty about the academic calendar, and provide faculty and students with sufficient advance notice of a change to the calendar.*

Motion: *The Faculty Senate approves the following process for converting the first Reading Day of the spring semester into a make-up class day:*

- 1) This process would commence when either (a) two full Tuesday/Thursday class days or (b) two full Monday/Wednesday/Friday class days have been curtailed during the spring semester.*
- 2) The Academic Standards and Advising Committee (ASAC), in conjunction with the Faculty Senate's Agenda Committee, would jointly make the decision as to what day of the class week will be made up (i.e. a Monday, a Tuesday, etc.).*
- 3) These committees would make the decision on how to convert the Reading Day as soon as possible after Spring Break, so that faculty and students would have the maximum amount of advance notice of the change.*
- 4) The announcement of the makeup day would be issued by the Office of the Provost.*
- 5) The Office of the Registrar is charged with prioritizing class scheduling over special event scheduling on the Reading Day in case of class make-up.*
- 6. This policy will not apply to UNH-Manchester, nor the UNH School of Law.*

The motion was put to a vote and passed, with 54 votes in favor, 2 votes opposed, and 1 abstention.

VIII. New Business – There was no new business.

IX. Adjournment – Upon a motion and second to adjourn, the meeting was adjourned at 3:41 p.m.