

University of New Hampshire

University of New Hampshire Scholars' Repository

Faculty Senate Agendas & Minutes

Faculty Senate Documents

9-12-2016

2016-17 FACULTY SENATE XXI - September 12, 2016 Minutes Summary

Faculty Senate

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

Recommended Citation

Faculty Senate, "2016-17 FACULTY SENATE XXI - September 12, 2016 Minutes Summary" (2016). *Faculty Senate Agendas & Minutes*. 183.

https://scholars.unh.edu/faculty_senate_agendas_minutes/183

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

UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
2016-17 FACULTY SENATE XXI

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 3:50 p.m. on September 12, 2016

MINUTES SUMMARY

I. Roll – The following senators were absent: Berlinsky, Simos, & Taylor. Ramsay was excused. Lopate and Condon served as proxies for Connell and Poworoznek, respectively. Erik Candy, Chris Clement, Leigh Anne Melanson, Kerry Scala, Nancy Targett, and P.T. Vasudevan were guests.

II. Remarks by and questions to the Provost – The Senate chair introduced Nancy Targett, who joined the UNH community on September 1, and turned the time over to her. Nancy reported that one of the first things she did in her capacity as provost was to reach out to the Senate leadership. She met with the chair and vice chair last week to discuss her vision as well as issues that are of concern to the Senate. In her letter to the community, she said that faculty and staff are the heart and soul of the institution, and that relationships between administration and faculty, particularly, matter. She said that she comes from a background where shared governance is important; while it may not mean that one side or the other is always right, it does mean that there is an ongoing conversation to figure out a path forward. She said that this is particularly important now, as the academic landscape is shifting dramatically. There are many drivers impacting the cost of education, and we need to recognize and embrace them in a way that is right for UNH. Our mission is to transform and inspire our students first and foremost, and to do that in a fiscally prudent way. She noted that UNH has been particularly thoughtful about seeking fiscal solutions because of the limited state funds it receives.

She shared that in her previous position at the University of Delaware, she received an award from the Faculty Senate there, which she offered as evidence of her commitment to shared governance and to seeking a way forward together. She asked the Senate what the big issues were that need to be addressed broadly.

A senator asked about the provost's opinion of the university as a driver for vocationalism versus being tasked with educating a certain kind of student. She replied with reference to a popular quote that vocational training prepares students for their first job and liberal arts prepares students for the rest of their lives. She emphasized the need to train students to think critically and assess, while also being aware of the concerns of parents for the cost of education. We can encourage our students to find a way forward with road maps for their education and internships. She stressed that this does not take away from our ability to train students broadly while they are here, and stated that we're not a vocational institution. Part of the whole picture is helping students find different career options as we can. She suggested that it doesn't have to be either/or – we can offer a sort of hybrid experience to our students that supports both the liberal

arts and other disciplines such as law, technology, or STEM, we are supposed to help these students think about where they want to end up and help position them for their future.

She commented on the general decline in the nation in the humanities, and said she has asked herself what it is that we have been doing to make the humanities less attractive to our students. She suggested that we may be positioning ourselves poorly, and posited whether identifying these humanities disciplines as “educating global citizens,” rather than “liberal arts” might send a different message that might resonate more richly with students and their parents. She noted the Global Scholars program at Delaware, which provided a high-impact experience for their students, and the increase in humanities enrollments as an apparent result. What can we do at UNH to attract students to the humanities? We need to meet the students where they are, which might mean re-naming some of our courses to catch the attention of our students as they peruse their course options, particularly as we have moved away from hard-copy catalogues to online course catalogues.

Another senator mentioned the large number of new administrators on campus, and asked if there is a way to familiarize them with the culture of self-governance at UNH and the kinds of transparency between faculty and administration that facilitates a sense of secure community. Nancy responded that as she has been meeting with faculty, staff, and students, she is asking each group to invite her to their meetings so that she can begin to build relationships of trust here in Durham, as well as in Manchester and Concord. She said she is in listening mode, without pre-conceived notions, and is seeking to learn what the collective view is to do what is best for UNH. She said she is here because this is where she wants to be.

A Research faculty senator asked what her opinion is of the role of research at the university. She replied that there are three important things that we do as university educators. The first is inspiring and transforming our students, which we do by innovative teaching in the classroom. The second is experiential learning, which is why students are taking courses in our classrooms rather than online, as here they have opportunities to interact with faculty and be guided in that way. The third aspect is that at universities we create new knowledge, and students in our classrooms have a chance to participate in the creation of that new knowledge, whether in laboratories or other venues. It is the broad as well as the applied understanding of that knowledge which helps to enrich our students and sets a university apart from massive open online courses (MOOC). While MOOCs have their place, she asserted that our faculty are our students’ greatest resource.

Another senator asked if the issue of grade inflation is on the provost’s radar. She asked if this is a problem at UNH, and he responded that it is. She responded that such a topic seems more suited to discussion in the Faculty Senate, suggesting that the faculty might not like having the administration direct them regarding grading policies. A senator said that RCM (Responsibility Center Management) first began with a discussion of grade inflation, with the deans seeking to address grading policy differences between the colleges.

Another senator said that over the past few years the Faculty Senate has offered many good recommendations, such as the establishment of the Center for Innovation of Teaching and Learning, and seeking clarity and transparency in promotion and tenure guidelines. He suggested that the provost examine some of the Senate’s recommendations. She said that when

she met with the Senate Agenda Committee, they offered to recommend specific Senate reports and motions that might be informative to her regarding some of the big issues.

A senator commented on the gradual rise in the ratio of Lecturers to Tenure-track faculty at UNH. With the recent unionization of the Lecturers, he asked the provost's opinion of the change in the balance. He said that to him, the issue is that more and more is being asked of Lecturers while they are not being offered the same kind of protection and security as Tenure-Track faculty. Nancy said that this is an issue she would like to examine more closely before carrying on a discussion with the senate, saying she would prefer to come back another time to have that conversation when she is more fully informed on what is happening here at UNH. She did say that the struggles the senator articulated are the same struggles being dealt with across the country. We need to find solutions here at UNH, but we also need to examine solutions for higher education in general.

Another senator brought up the recent controversy over the \$4 million gift from a former UNH librarian to the university, one-fourth of which President Huddleston chose to spend on the new scoreboard in the football stadium. The provost replied that she is not informed enough on that topic to respond.

The senate chair thanked Provost Targett for her time.

III. Remarks by and questions to the Senate Chair - Chair Dante Scala reminded the Senate that the documents attached to today's agenda that have to do with Navitas will not be discussed in this meeting, but were attached to give senators time to read through them and share them with their departmental colleagues so that senators will have feedback to bring to future Senate conversations about the Navitas self-study report. He pointed out that the report itself can be found in the What's News area of the Senate website, along with several appendices to that report.

The Senate Academic Affairs Committee chair said that his committee will be examining the Navitas self-study, and that they are seeking feedback from faculty about their experiences with the Navitas students. He invited faculty to email him with information. He also said that he would be meeting briefly this week with the external reviewers who are coming to campus to look at the program, and invited anyone with immediate questions or concerns for those reviewers to email him right away. Dante noted that the Senate Student Affairs Committee will also be examining the self-study.

Dante then said that he expects to receive more information on Title IX and mandated reporting between now and the next Senate meeting, noting that President Huddleston mentioned this in his welcome letter to the campus community. He invited feedback on this topic as well. In general, he encouraged the senators to reach out to their departmental colleagues in various and creative ways, not just to wait for faculty meetings to share and discuss relevant issues. In this way, more genuine feedback can be gathered to inform our discussions here.

The chair said that the Senate committee charges have gone out to the committees now. There may be additional charges as the year moves forward. The charges will be posted on the public Senate website. He said that the Senate committee chairs will be contacting senators regarding

meeting times and places, and emphasized the importance of the work that will be done in committees this year producing resolutions that will shape Senate conversations. The more work we do early, the less grueling the end of the year will be.

A senator commented that he preferred McConnell 220 to this space, saying that it was easier to see one another in that space. Dante noted that with the increase of the size of the Senate, there currently are not many rooms on campus that can accommodate this group, and that for this year, this room is likely our best option. There may be other options in the future.

IV. Presentation by Vice President for Finance – Chris Clement, Vice President for Finance and Administration, was introduced to the Senate. He was accompanied by Leigh Anne Melanson, Associate Provost for Finance and Academic Administration, Kerry Scala, Assistant Vice President for Finance, and P.T. Vasudevan, Senior Vice Provost for Academic Affairs. Chris said he was glad to meet with the Senate, noting that scheduling last year did not allow him to have a similar conversation in the previous Senate session.

Chris said he would like to address some questions from the Senate Finance and Administration Committee (FAC) chair, including a brief description of the new Budget Advisory Committee and its membership and the processes used in the revision of the RCM model which happened about a year and a half ago. He referenced the Faculty Senate discussion from April 13, 2013. The FAC chair said that her question had to do with the more recently implemented revisions to RCM, particularly the decisions made on credit weighting. The previous FAC chair pointed out that the credit weighting changes were part of the earlier revision, but were only implemented this past spring. He noted that since the faculty were not included in making the decisions about the credit weighting system, they were not aware of the plan until it was implemented. Chris noted that since the Central Budget Committee was not meeting, there was no vehicle to share some of these budget decisions with the faculty. He said that the administration's goal is to have a meeting of the new Budget Advisory Committee this November in order to be able to share budget information with the faculty.

The current FAC chair asked who the players were in making the credit weighting changes in the last academic year. Leigh Anne Melanson said that the Strategic Planning Committee came up with the models, after which they met with the President's Cabinet, with the deans, and with other constituents. At that time, she said that the previous provost and Chris came to the senate to discuss the recommendations. Vasu referred to the minutes of the [Faculty Senate meeting of April 13, 2015 \(Item III\)](#).

A senator asked, in terms of how much money goes into strategic initiatives as opposed to other central administration costs and what goes into strategic initiatives, if there is a set of principles the administration works with underlying that or if the plan is more organically developed. Chris said that there is a process, which is what the previous provost worked with in developing this plan. He said that twice a year, his office seeks ideas for strategic initiatives, meeting with administrators from the academic side. Leigh Anne added that the deans send forward prioritized lists of proposals from their colleges for potential projects. These proposals are reviewed to see if the colleges can support the projects as strategic initiatives or if the central administration should take them on. The senator asked if the administration relies on the deans

to get faculty input on these proposals. Leigh Anne said that for the most part, the deans rely on their college executive committees for that kind of faculty input.

The Senate FAC chair asked why the Central Budget Committee stopped meeting, noting that it was a singular venue for faculty input and education regarding budget matters. She asked what thinking resulted in the elimination of this venue. Chris said that the CBC had stopped meeting before he came to UNH and so he could not speak to that question. He plans to meet soon with the new Budget Advisory Committee. The FAC chair asked him how shared governance plays into his office's processes. Chris replied that he has discovered that his current position demands, more than any other work he has done in the state or in the world of business, that the principles of shared governance must guide every administrative action.

A senator asked what faculty will be involved in the Budget Advisory Committee. Chris responded that there will be two faculty appointed to the committee by the Faculty Senate Agenda Committee. The committee will be comprised of three administrators (VP for Finance and Administration, the provost, and a dean to be selected by the provost), two faculty members (appointed by the Faculty Senate), two students, and one staff member to be selected by the Tri-Council chairs. He said that the needs of all three campuses should be taken into account. The BAC will meet once in the fall and once in the spring, and invited the senators to bring questions or concerns to him any time in between.

The past Senate chair said that the credit weighting issue was discussed in the Senate last spring, but rather after the fact, which is one of the objections faculty have and why the need for the new Budget Advisory Committee is so important.

A senator asked if two meetings per year is enough for the difficult tasks facing the BAC. Chris said that the financial administrators meet constantly, and if there is a need for additional meetings with the full BAC, that can be arranged.

Another senator said she served on the first review committee of the RCM years ago, as well as on the Central Budget Committee. She said that the problem is that faculty have been ignored in recent years in budgetary decisions, and the faculty would like to know why. She said it is fine if Chris doesn't know why this happened, but urged him to ask other administrators and find out why. She said that there were deans who were shocked at the changes in credit hour weighting. Vasu replied that the deans were all consulted regarding the changes. The senator responded that she had personal knowledge of three deans who were surprised to learn about the changes.

The chair of the Senate FAC said that last year the FAC repeatedly invited the VPFA to meet with them, with no success. She said that if faculty are not engaged in discussion with administrators about these issues, that is a problem. Another senator asked the VPFA if he was willing to commit to meeting once a month with the FAC. Chris replied that he would need to confirm the appropriateness with the provost, but his tendency was to say yes. He said that while faculty and administrators may ultimately disagree about the use of funds, he is happy to have the conversations which will keep faculty informed. The latter senator invited Chris to keep the FAC chair apprised of the provost's response.

Leigh Anne Melanson said that the recent RCM review was a relatively minor change, and that the former provost met with faculty and staff to make sure that there was nothing in RCM that was taking away from the strategic plan. The only change that they made in that RCM review, not including the credit hour weighting/revenue retention, was in how Research Faculty receive their funding. She also said that revenue retention rates have not been part of the RCM review, but rather have always been what management feels we need to manage our costs. She reminded the group that with state budget cuts in fiscal year 2012, there was a \$12 million deficit gap that the central administration absorbed in order to leave funds available for the colleges.

The senate vice chair, who served as the Senate FAC chair last year, said that he is concerned at the adversarial tone of today's conversation, which was not what he had hoped for. He said that the Senate would like to understand how the university budget works, and then to have voice in that process. He asked the administration to commit to communicating with the Senate, either through the FAC or in a meeting such as this one. He said that all that is wanted is for faculty to have a role to play here, and to protect the academic mission of the university. Vasu said that he is happy to meet with the VPFA and the FAC. The senate vice chair noted that [Senate Motion XX-M31](#) requests that those meetings should be held twice each semester.

Chris said that he doesn't feel an adversarial spirit in today's meeting. He said that the faculty are asking thoughtful questions, and that it's important that they have a way to get answers. A senator expressed surprise that a vice president in charge of finance would have to check with anyone before responding to the kinds of questions asked today. Chris replied that in his work with the provost, he has learned that it is important to communicate with his colleagues before making broad statements. He acknowledged that he should have met earlier with the Senate FAC and committed to rectifying that.

Dante thanked Chris and the others for their time today.

V. Presentation by Erik Candy, managing director of EAB – Dante turned the time over to the Senior Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, P.T. Vasudevan, who introduced Erik Candy, the managing director of the Educational Advisory Board. Vasu said that the associate deans viewed a presentation of this software two years ago. He said that there are rising concerns about student debt, which averages about \$35,000 per four-year degree, and about graduation rates (UNH's four-year rate is about 65%, and its six-year rate is about 75%). Last year's [Curran report](#) recommended more effective academic advising to help increase the efficiency of student enrollments. Erik was invited to share a presentation on Student Success Collaborative software. This software can be used to optimize the academic advising of students.

Erik began by asking how we look at the data that we have regarding student enrollments and academic success. The Education Advisory Board works with over a thousand colleges and universities across the country. He said that having a common data set is very helpful in providing data we can use in advising students across colleges and departments, as we work to bring together interests, passions along the optimal path to success. The data set that would be developed for UNH would be unique to UNH; our students, our data only. That data can be specialized for professional counselors, faculty, deans, or other members of the UNH community to inform the work they do with students.

He said that in the past, the focus has been on the highest-risk and lowest-risk students; those who are floundering and dropping classes as well as those who have a clear vision of what they want to accomplish and are successful at it. Erik suggested that the students in the middle provide another opportunity. If the first-year retention rate is about 86% and the six-year rate is 79%, we are losing students in the middle. He suggested that the goal is persistence, and reducing attrition, rather than simply retention.

The data would be extracted from Banner and run through a series of analyses and returned to appropriate heads of programs to establish certain markers that would identify success in a particular program. The software compares a student's success in any given course with the data base to offer information about the likelihood of success in that field of study, or in a number of other fields of study. This information allows faculty and advisors to make recommendations regarding the student's academic direction. Erik asserted that we can expand our capacity to advise effectively by evolving the way we interact with students.

He suggested that getting information to students early, before registration, is important (such as a hold being placed). High-touch care means that professionals in all of the areas of campus life need to be clued in - Academic Affairs and Financial Aid and Student Affairs, for example. Using data from Banner, those in advising roles can review data daily. Faculty, professional advisors, tutors, student services staff, and financial aid can all find applications for this information, and filters exist in the software that can be used by each group. At each touch-point, we do whatever we can do, and then refer students to other resources to fill in the gaps. The software provides connections between areas, offering reports and reminders to guide students to the next step to help close the loop on what needs to be done.

He said that the technology is about a third of the value of being in the collaborative. The other components are having access to a dedicated consultant team to work with in interpreting the data, and having access to best practices and a network of peers.

He said that the software allows us to examine data by departments, to allow us to track major changes (switching majors) across departments and colleges. The software can also be used to strategize how to help a specific group of students who have missed a threshold. Targeted students can receive emails or texts designed to alert them to resources available to them. These are pre-populated messages that can be tailored to specific students' needs. These campaigns are launched in the background and can monitor student usage of the services. It is also possible to identify students who may be ready to change majors, and provide information to them and their service providers about options that may result in greater success.

VI. Minutes – It was moved and seconded to the minutes from the August 29, 2016 meeting. The minutes were approved unanimously as submitted, with 4 abstentions.

VII. New Business – The chair of the Senate Finance and Administration Committee said that the earlier conversation with the VPFA seemed odd, with no real information being shared. Dante suggested that the senators' pointed questions and concerns represented a necessary clearing of the air. He said that today's conversation gave the VPFA a better sense off the level of discontent among faculty with the way budget information has been communicated.

A senator asserted that the current rules for RCM still call for a Central Budget Committee, and asked why a new committee has been formed instead. Dante said that the written rules have not been updated to reflect the change. He explained that the new committee has the same role and charge as the CBC, but that it is smaller and nimbler.

Another senator said that she is concerned that when the President spoke to this group two weeks ago, he made no mention of the \$4 million gift from Bob Morin, former library faculty member, nor that \$1 million of that gift was being spent on the new scoreboard for the football stadium. She asserted that certainly that information was available to be shared, and expressed dismay that this information, and the decision-making process behind it, was kept from the faculty. She asked what role the Senate has in shared governance when it seems that faculty are kept out of the loop in this way; this does not feel like shared governance. She referenced a faculty retreat some years ago in which creating a model for shared governance was a key topic. One of the outcomes of that retreat was to have been a report on shared governance at UNH. Another senator asked if there is such a document at UNH. Dante replied that a broad definition is found in the Senate constitution and bylaws. The former senator said that creating such a document had been the object of the above mentioned faculty retreat, but that she has never seen any such document.

Dante replied that this is an example of an area where shared governance does not seem to be working well, and reminded the group that there are other areas in which shared governance is working well. He said that we need to address those gaps where it is not working, and asserted that we will measure our success as a Senate next spring when we look back to see if we are doing better than we are now.

Another senator expressed disappointment that the discussion with administrators today provided no straight answers to senators' questions. A senator asked if the senate can expect from today's conversation that the VPFA will meet with the FAC twice this semester. She asked what the next steps forward will be. Dante replied that his job is to connect the dots between where we are and where we want to be. He expressed optimism that the new provost will be on board with bridging the gaps that have been discussed today.

A senator asked if two faculty have actually been assigned to the new Budget Advisory Committee. Dante responded that the Erin Sharp, chair of the Senate FAC, and Nicoletta Gulace have been appointed to the BAC. Another senator said that a former Senate FAC chair, Mike Carter, would be a good resource if the Senate would like relevant history regarding the Central Budget Committee, RCM, or the credit weighting issue.

A senator asked what will happen with the advising tool demonstrated today by Erik Candy. Erik responded that he is seeking feedback and reactions to what the senators have seen today. The senator asked who will make the decision regarding the purchase and use of the software. The provost's office arranged for today's demonstration. Dante encouraged senators to ask Erik questions after this meeting, and also to send questions and feedback directly to the Senate chair, who will pass that feedback on to Vasu. Dante said that there will be further discussion on this in the Senate. A senator asked what the cost would be. Erik replied that the cost would be \$143,000 per year to use the Student Success Collaborative software.

Another senator asked if student retention is the reason the administration is looking into this program. Erik replied that organizations are spending a lot of time looking at first year retention, but that there is evidence that real success in student advising comes from persistence beyond the first year, and in helping students to find a major that is both realistic as well as fitting their passions. He said it's not so much about degree efficiency, but about preventing students from accumulating unnecessary credits, by providing a more customized advising experience and ultimately increasing student satisfaction.

IX. Adjournment - Upon a motion and second to adjourn, the group voted to adjourn the meeting at 5:30 p.m.