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2015-16 FACULTY SENATE XX - February 1, 2016 Minutes Summary

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UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
2015-16 FACULTY SENATE XX

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 3:46 p.m. Monday, February 1, 2016 MINUTES SUMMARY

I. Roll – The following senators were absent: Aytur, Emison, Franczak, and Wu. Bachrach, Erickson, Freedman, and Scherr were excused. Debbie Dutton and P.T. Vasudevan were guests.

II. Remarks by and questions to the interim provost – The provost shared a PowerPoint presentation on Faculty, Staff, Student and Administration FTE Analysis prepared with Leigh Anne Melanson. The presentation demonstrated student to faculty ratios at both UNH Durham and UNH-Manchester from FY05 to FY16, indicating an increase from 19.8 to 22.8 for tenure-track faculty and a level marker of 16.2 for total faculty across that time span. These numbers exclude Extension and Research Faculty, as well as Post docs.

The provost also shared data regarding staff to faculty ratios in the same time frame, with a level ratio of 2.6 for staff to tenure-track faculty on the Durham campus, and a decrease from 2.14 (FY05) to 1.96 (FY16) for staff to total faculty, excluding staff in grant-funded positions.

The ratio of faculty to administrators was shown to be essentially stable over the last eleven years on the Durham campus, 18.23(FY05) to 18.26(FY16) for total faculty, and dropping slightly from 14.88 to 12.96 for tenure-track faculty, excluding again Extension and Research Faculty and Post docs.

The direct count of total faculty at UNH Durham rose from 768.7 (FY05) to 891.3 (FY16). For tenure-track faculty, the numbers were 627.9 to 629.8. During that same time, the number of administrators on the Durham campus rose from 42 to 49.

The provost discussed the administrative positions which have been added from FY 2004 to FY 2016, including AVP for Advancement Services, an Associate Provost for International Programs (formerly a faculty director), Assistant VP for Public Relations, Executive Director for Engagement and Faculty Development, Assistant Vice President for HR, Assistant Vice President for Enterprise Computing, an Associate Dean for COLSA, and a Chief Sustainability Officer. Two positions were eliminated – the Dean for Continuing Education and the Assistant Vice President for Operations.

Several positions have experienced a title change: The Vice President for Research is now the Senior Vice Provost, the Foundation President is now the Vice President for Advancement, the VP for University Communications is the Associate Vice President for Communications and Public Affairs. The Director for IP is now the Associate Vice Provost for Entrepreneurship and New Ventures, and the Vice Provost for Inclusive Excellence is now the Associate Vice

President for Community Equity and Diversity, reporting now to the President rather than the Provost (position changed in 2005).

The provost reported that colleges and universities, including UNH, have invested in professional jobs that provide non-instructional student services. There has been growth in student services, Advancement, CPA, HR, and admissions staff. He said that part time faculty provide additional capacity. He noted that the number of faculty and benefits-eligible staff per administrator has declined from 57 in FY04 to 51 in FY13, but has remained stable since that time.

Vasu then cited a [recent article in the Washington Post](#) regarding the increasing costs of higher education, and shared the following:

Students demand more services outside the classroom and colleges are providing more amenities to attract applicants. Spending on student services (counseling, mental health) has increased by 20% in the last decade at US universities

- *According to the Delta Cost Project, student tuition dollars at public research universities covered around 50 percent of educational costs in 2008. Today, they cover nearly 63 percent. Meanwhile, when measured per student, state spending on instruction at public colleges is at its lowest point since 1980.*
- *What the public sees is the increase in tuition (65 - 70% increase in 5 years).*
- *From Inside Higher Ed and APLU: After adjusting for inflation, four-year public universities experienced state funding cuts of \$2,370 per student during those six years (07 to 13), while tuition and fee revenues increased by \$1,940 per student -- resulting in a net loss of \$430 per full-time student.*

In answer to several questions, the provost said that the data in this report used figures back to 2005 (and 2004) because those numbers were most easily accessible (due to availability of information from Banner). “Administrator” in this report is defined as PAT grade 3 and above, and associate deans and above. Department chairs are not considered administrators for the purposes of this report. A senator pointed out that the total cost of an administrative position, includes the necessary staff positions to support that administrator’s work. The provost said it would be very interesting to gather information about the ratios of staff to administrators, etc., in each of the units.

Another senator asserted that as the decrease in the number of tenure-track faculty and increase in part-time faculty relative to the number of students should indicate a reduction in per-student tuition dollars going towards instructions. The provost maintained that we don’t really have those numbers.

A senator referenced a New York Times article that said that nationally, administrative positions at colleges have increased by 60% since 1993, and wondered if an expanded time frame might shed more light on this topic. The provost said that UNH doesn’t have the same number of administrators as other state universities. Another senator asked if this kind of data

could be made available annually for the information of the faculty. Vasu said he thought that was both possible and a good idea, noting that the university is planning to set up an electronic dashboard that might be an appropriate location for such information.

A senator suggested that the last ten years has been a unique economic period in this area, and that more accurate conclusions might be drawn from data gathered over the past forty years rather than just ten, if we're seeking to understand the trends in the cost of education.

Vasu asserted that there might be other ways to reduce the cost of a college degree, like a flexible calendar that might allow students to graduate faster and reduce their costs. He said that the larger problem UNH is facing now has to do with demographics. He said that for the first time, UNH has more out of state students (52%) than in-state students.

Another senator noted the rise in costs for student services and facilities, and asked what the difference between the total cost of a university experience versus the actual cost of educating students might be. Vasu agreed that rising fees are part of the rising cost.

As senator asked if the declining ratio of tenure-track faculty to students is having a negative impact on UNH's status as a research institution, and asked how we might maintain our status in the face of these declining numbers. The provost responded that this is part of a larger conversation, and suggested that the size of the start-up packages is also an issue. He suggested it is important to examine the return of the investment considering the fact that federal funding is decreasing.

Another senator asked if we know why we're losing our in-state students to other state institutions? Vasu replied that it's a combination of several factors, pointing to NH residents' negative response to the state higher education funding cuts as one of those factors. He said that the fact that UNH has no honors college is also a negative selling point to resident graduates, and that it is hard for UNH to compete with the deep discounts offered by private schools. A senator asked what the difference between UNH's honors program and an honors college might be. Vasu responded that it is a highly attractive feature that many of our competitors have and we do not.

A senator asked the provost to explain the discount rates he referenced. He said that the discount rate in general is aid dollars as a percentage of tuition and fees, and is about 30% for UNH.

The chair thanked the provost for his comments.

III. Discussion with UNH's Vice President for Advancement – The senate chair introduced Debbie Dutton, VP for Advancement. She shared a [PowerPoint presentation regarding the current fundraising campaign](#), which she said has entered its public phase. In the presentation, she shared the campaign timeline from January 2011 through June 2018. The target goal will be announced in September 2016. She said that nearly \$200 million has been raised already, which is about two times the amount of the last campaign.

She asserted that it is important to set goals that challenge the community without overshooting the mark. The college deans were asked what is needed to grow their colleges. With that input, the task of UNH Advancement is to set priorities and goals, and then seek out donors whose passions align with our priorities. The top five priorities shared are Student Support (including both merit-based and need-based scholarships), Faculty Support, Research Support, Program Support, and Capital Purposes.

Debbie said that a prime objective is to meet and exceed our goals in order to lay the groundwork for future fundraising, asserting that donors give for a purpose, not for a campaign. She said that financial aid to students continues as a top priority of our donors, and noted that the donors ultimately decide the priorities, while the Advancement team works to help them find their passion. A senator asked if most donations come in large chunks, and Debbie responded that there are many small donations as well.

She acknowledged that faculty who are not alumni are not solicited. A senator pointed out that many of our alumni attended UNH when state support/funding was very different than it is now, asking how we can effectively communicate our current private donations without alienating politicians. Debbie said that the best way is to share the tremendous stories that show what private donations accomplish here.

The final slide of the presentation included contact information from the Advancement Directory, sharing phone numbers and email addresses of Development Officers by college for faculty reference. The senate chair thanked Debbie for today's information. The slide presentation will be available to faculty.

IV. Remarks by and questions to the senate chair – Deb Kinghorn opened her remarks by informing the senate that she has requested that faculty senate members have access to tickets for the Democratic presidential debate this week. A senator said that he just received an email announcing that the tickets will be available by lottery. Anyone interested in tickets should apply to enter the lottery by 3 p.m. tomorrow.

The chair then updated the group on the motion passed by the senate regarding the re-institution of the Campus Budget Committee. President Huddleston has communicated his support of some kind of faculty engagement in budgetary matters, whether in the CBC or some other form. The CBC has not met as our motion stipulated, but she assured the senate that this matter is moving forward, and faculty will have input. She hopes to have more information on February 15. The co-chair of the Senate Finance and Administration Committee said that he is meeting with VP Clement tomorrow.

The chair then announced that Nancy Targett has been selected as the new provost. The 93% positive response rate to the Qualtrics survey regarding her candidacy seemed an overwhelming indicator to the committee. Nancy will be visiting UNH several times during this semester to familiarize herself with UNH. The chair hopes that Nancy might be able to visit with the senate at some point. Deb also expressed her pleasure that current interim provost Vasudevan will resume his prior responsibilities as Senior Vice Provost for Academic Affairs next year when Provost Targett begins her service.

Deb had no further update on the Title IX issues, and said that Jaime Nolan and Donna Marie Sorrentino are working on how to respond to the faculty union regarding the latter's opposition to all faculty being mandated reporters.

On February 29, Vasu will report on the changes to the RCM.

V. Minutes – It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes of the last senate meeting, December 7, 2015. A senator questioned a statement attributed to the Senate FAC chair in her committee's report (Item IX), regarding the cause for reduced graduate student enrollments. Upon review of the recordings, the minutes were adjusted reflect that the impetus referred to was the economic recession. Next, the chair of the TEVC committee offered clarification from his committee's report (Item VII), saying that the ability to link quantitative and qualitative responses from student evaluations of teaching is a future possibility, but not part of the current available data. Thus adjusted, the minutes were unanimously approved with no abstentions.

Action Items:

VI. Discussion and vote on motion from AAC on cancellation of classes on the Wednesday before Thanksgiving – Scott Smith, senate AAC chair said there has been little additional feedback from faculty on this topic since the last meeting. At that time, the overwhelming response was to continue the cancellation of the Wednesday before Thanksgiving. The current motion also includes the elimination of the fall break in October. There was discussion from the senate, including a motion to amend the motion to a trial period of only one year instead of three to allow for more flexibility as additional feedback is gathered on this practice. Scott asserted that more data is needed from faculty on this matter.

A senator said that his department is not in favor of eliminating the fall break, and there was some conversation about the necessity of eliminating the fall break in order to cancel the Wednesday before Thanksgiving (WBT). A senator noted that the necessary earlier start to the semester, should the calendar include both a fall break and the WBT, would negatively impact internships. Students have said that they would like both breaks, but the senate chair noted that the Student Senate has said that, given a choice, the students would prefer to keep the fall break.

Another senator emphasized the importance of reminding faculty, should the WBT be cancelled, that it is important to not cancel classes on the Tuesday (or Monday) before Thanksgiving, as well. He said that eliminating the WBT is not providing a "fall break," but rather is honoring the travel challenges around the family-centered Thanksgiving holiday. The senate chair pointed out that the WBT has always maintained a Friday schedule, not a Wednesday schedule, meaning that there are fewer classes actually being cancelled, should that day be eliminated.

A senator suggested adding a comma between "...Thanksgiving..." and "...and Fall Break..." for clarity. Finally, it was suggested that the AAC review the effects of the calendar change at the end of the fall semester. The senate chair suggested that an item be added to the senate

calendar for next year to review this matter. The AAC accepted these suggestions as friendly amendments, and the revised motion then read:

Motion: The Senate Academic Affairs Committee moves that the Faculty Senate adjust the calendar such that classes are cancelled on the Wednesday before Thanksgiving, and Fall Break is eliminated for a period of one year (through AY 16-17). It also recommends that the Academic Affairs Committee review the effects of this change during the next academic year.

The motion was put to a vote and passed, with 40 votes in favor, 3 votes opposed and 0 abstentions.

VII. Motion from TEVC regarding implementation of online evaluations – Alberto Manalo, chair of the Teaching Evaluation Form Implementation Committee, reported that the overall response rate for online evaluations for the Fall 2015 semester was 66%, up from 61% from Spring 2015. 40% of courses in the fall had a response rate of at least 70%, up from 28% in Spring 2015. 15% of courses had a response rate of less than 50%, down from 22% in Spring 2015.

One of the factors that may have helped raise these numbers is that many faculty members set aside time during their classes for students to respond. These faculty saw a significant increase in the response rate. There was also an increase in the number of automated reminders to students to complete the evaluations.

With this update, Alberto presented his committee's motion again, noting that with the online evaluation it will be easier for departments and programs to personalize their evaluations by adding additional questions specific to their programs. The online evaluation also generates a faster turnaround time for results for the evaluation of Lecturers and other faculty members who may rely on evaluation results for advancement. He also emphasized increased security with the use of online evaluations, citing at least one instance of a packet of paper evaluations being left in the hallway outside a department office door overnight. Such an occurrence poses the risk of data loss, or worse.

*UNH Faculty Senate XX Motion
on Online Administration of Student Evaluation of Teaching for all Faculty Members
in Spring Semester 2016*

Motion

The ad hoc teaching evaluation form implementation committee moves that:

- *All student evaluations of teaching be administered online beginning Spring Semester 2016.*
- *If the mean values for the evaluation questions are lower than the norm for the paper evaluations in preceding years, then such differences must be reported to department chairs, deans and the provost, and the Faculty Senate must call on them to make the appropriate adjustments in their evaluation criteria.*

- *The Faculty Senate should continue monitoring the teaching-evaluation results until new norms for the averages for the various items or questions have been established.*
- *The Faculty Senate should call on the IR&A to generate as soon as possible the reports that the faculty wants, such as the link between quantitative and qualitative responses and the mean of the average ratings for questions 1 to 13.*
-

The senate chair invited discussion on the motion. The senator from the Music department asked if it is possible for a department to remove any of the standard evaluation questions, while personalizing an online evaluation for departmental use. He said that some of the standard questions have no pertinence to some music courses. Alberto was unsure if eliminating the basic questions would be allowed, but said that questions that are relevant to the courses can be added, and reminded the group that departments can continue to use the same questions they have been using, if they have been administering unique evaluations to their students.

There were several comments in support of aligning the written responses with their corresponding quantitative responses. Alberto said he believed that with some effort, those responses could be linked.

A senator asked if the online evaluations could be extended to include TAs and Graduate Assistants, who also need a quick turnaround for evaluation results. Alberto said that was the plan. The Graduate Student Senate representative expressed concern over the low response rate and asked if student grades could be held until they completed the course evaluation. Alberto said that the administration is reluctant to take this approach, and would rather seek other methods to encourage compliance, although such a solution has not been ruled out. The GSS rep asked if there is a way to provide hard copies of the evaluation results for students who might want to use them as part of their vitae. Alberto said he believes the results will be available to instructors. She then asked if instructors might have a choice between paper and online evaluations, and Alberto said that is not an option.

A senator expressed concern that the window of opportunity to complete the online evaluations was significantly shorter than the two week time frame for paper evaluations in the past. Alberto said that others have expressed the same concern and that more time may be allowed in the future. The senator also was concerned about courses which have undergraduate, honors, and graduate students all in the same class. These courses are divided by class number, and although they have more than five students in the classroom, each division of the course may have less than five, which means that no evaluation is counted. Another senator said that the five student minimum seems unfair. Alberto said that Institutional Research and Assessment is aware of this issue, although he is unsure of the solution. He said that the five student minimum is university policy. The senate chair said she would take up this question with the provost.

Another senator said that the online evaluation process assumes symmetry, and ignores the fact that willingness to complete the evaluation or not may be affected by attitude as much as anything. He suggested that the system is based on theory, not evidence, calling it inferior to

the current system of evaluation, and asserting that if the new system fails, faculty could suffer in advancement.

Alberto responded that the slightly lower ratings in the program's pilots may be due to the lower response rates, but that if a clearly negative impact is seen from the implementation of the new program, then department chairs and deans can make appropriate adjustments. He said it is important to monitor the results. There were questions regarding what an appropriate adjustment might be, and concerns that such adjustments are likely to be inconsistent across courses, departments, and colleges. A senator expressed concern that lower responses might be used against faculty by some administrators. Another senator asked if the provost could guide deans and department chairs to provide consistency, noting that the faculty senate has no teeth to insure appropriate adjustment is administered. Alberto said that the senate can express its concerns. Another senator said that the senate can refuse to support the use of online evaluations until the administration makes a meaningful commitment to assure appropriate adjustment.

A senator said that there is evidence of gender bias in student evaluations and asked if the monitoring of evaluation results might provide an opportunity to review the evaluations for such bias. Alberto said that this seems possible. Another senator suggested speaking with Victor Benassi regarding this.

Another senator expressed concern about using class time to complete the evaluations when she is unsure that all students will have (or bring) their electronic devices with them. Alberto responded that, anecdotally, he used the online evaluations in his class. He gave them notice of when they should bring their devices to class, and his class's response rate was 80%. Another senator said that some of his students had difficulty using their phones to complete the evaluation.

The motion was put to a vote and failed, with 13 votes in favor, 25 opposed, and 1 abstention.

VIII. New Business – A senator thanked the chair of the TEVC committee and its members for their extensive efforts on this matter, acknowledging that there is much potential in the effort to move to online evaluations, as well as many concerns to be addressed. He praised the TEVC for their hard work. The group offered their thanks by applause.

The senate chair then asked the senators to review their senate experience over the last semester, and invited them to consider if the senate is appropriately serving their departments. She said that now is the time to bring forward any concerns so that they can be appropriately addressed this semester.

IX. Adjournment- It was moved and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 5:28 p.m.