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UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
2013-14 FACULTY SENATE

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 3:10 on February 10, 2014

MINUTES SUMMARY

I. Roll – The following senators were absent: Morgan, Shannon, and White. Raina Ames was proxy for Kinghorn. Kazura was excused. Lisa MacFarlane was a guest.

II. Remarks by and questions to the provost – The provost briefly reviewed for the senate the Board of Trustees’ meeting held January 29-30 at Plymouth State. The Board reviewed capital projects in preparation for requesting state appropriations for those projects. She said that Ham-Smith is still at the top of that list for improvements. She mentioned the Educational Excellence portion of the meetings in which reports were presented on academic quality metrics, a range of items reflecting academic quality at the university, noting that passage rates by our students on national exams are well above the national norms.

Lisa also spoke about the trustees’ concerns about matching curriculum with state employment needs, pointing out that as a research institution, meeting these needs is only a piece of the academic mission of UNH, opening complex conversation on these issues. The next conversation she anticipates will be one regarding the use of technology in the classroom.

A senator asked about the enrollment stress-testing the provost spoke of in a previous senate meeting. The provost indicated that there had not been conversations about this in the public sessions of the meetings, but that she believes it will be on the docket for the next Board of Trustees’ meeting. She mentioned that according to preliminary reports, it appears that the university is in good shape, even in the event of some downturn in enrollments.

Another senator asked about the construction plans for Kendall Hall. The provost responded that there is a meeting scheduled for February 18th regarding plans for long-term needs in the sciences in general. With upcoming retirements, there are new questions about where the space needs are, and what the balance will be between research space and teaching space needs. She reported that she has asked the deans to block out anticipated faculty needs over the next five to seven years, in order to gain a better vision of where the needs are, and that she has asked the president for an investment in research space over those five to seven years. She said that it will be more expensive to renovate Kendall than to replace it, but that the space might be utilized as swing space.

A senator from the Paul College of Business and Economics invited the provost to speak with the business school regarding alumni and business connections, saying that they have gathered a large amount of information that could be useful to the administration in projecting needs. The provost thanked him and said that she would pass that information along. The senator asked if there had been updates on the campus master plan which was to be approved by the Board of

Trustees last year, but which he believed was delayed. The provost said that the plan has not been discussed in this year's meetings so far.

III. Remarks by and questions to the chair – The chair had no remarks, and there were no questions.

IV. Minutes – the minutes of the last senate meeting, January 27, 2014 were unanimously approved with two abstentions.

Action Items:

V. Presentation of an Academic Affairs Committee motion on the extension of the on-line course registration for senate vote – The senate chair invited the Academic Affairs Committee chair to present the AAC's motion regarding extending the on-line course registration period one week into the term:

**UNH FACULTY SENATE
MOTION # XVIII-M6**

To extend the on-line course registration period one week into the term

- 1. Motion presenter: Michael Ferber, Academic Affairs Committee Chair**
- 2. Dates of Faculty Senate discussion: 2/10/2014, 1/27/2014**
- 3. Motion: That the Faculty Senate recommends extending on-line course registration until the end of the first week of classes of the spring and fall semesters, with the proviso that all standing restrictions will still apply (and still require paper permission forms) and that instructors will be notified by the Registrar immediately after a student is enrolled.**
- 4. Rationale: Both the Registrar and the Vice President for Student and Academic Services have recently expressed the view that it would be helpful to students if they could add or drop courses on-line during the first week of classes, and that it would be feasible technically. Currently students may register on-line only up to the first day of classes; after that they must get a paper add-drop form and have it signed by the instructor.**

We considered some objections to this proposal from the point of view of the instructor, who will want to know how many students are enrolled from day to day, may have a policy about attendance at the first class meeting, and the like, but we think these may be met if the Registrar will have set up an automatic notification of the instructor whenever a student signs up after classes have begun. All controls placed by departments, such as "permission-required," would remain in place, as would capacity limits, so students would still need to fill out paper forms to have such controls lifted in their case. First-year students would not be allowed to

register on-line, as they are more likely to need to discuss the course(s) in question with the instructor or their adviser.

We also think this would make late registration somewhat more efficient and more frugal with paper.

Needing no second, the senate chair put the motion to vote. The motion passed by majority vote.

VI. Presentation of an Academic Affairs committee resolution in response to Student Senate Resolution #06 Blackboard Standards for Course Sites – the Academic Affairs Committee chair then presented the committee’s resolution regarding Blackboard use by faculty, as described in the last senate meeting [*Senate Minutes: January 27, 2014, Item VI*]:

“The Faculty Senate urges all instructors of all ranks to post their course syllabi and schedules on Blackboard, and make them ‘available’ to the enrolled students by the beginning of the term.

This resolution will be communicated to all chairs and deans.”

A senator mentioned that her department administrative assistants post all syllabi on the department’s website. Another senator mentioned that her department keeps hard copies of all current syllabi, which are available to anyone who requests them. It was noted that both of these practices seem to be in the spirit of the Student Senate Resolution #06, and of the senate resolution above.

Needing no second, the senate chair put the resolution to vote and it passed with 36 in favor, 1 against, and 2 abstentions.

Discussion Items:

VII. Report from the Academic Affairs Committee on the alignment of procedures between the Durham and Manchester campuses regarding student petitions to drop a course after the usual deadline – Michael Ferber, as chair of the Academic Affairs Committee (AAC), presented the committee’s report, citing **SENATE MOTION # XVII-M8**. Their report follows:

February 10, 2014

“Last year (February 11, 2013) the Senate discussed a case at UNH Manchester where several students wished to withdraw from a course after receiving a failing final grade. The professor teaching the course opposed the withdrawals but was overruled by the dean. The Senate did not consider it its business to adjudicate the case, but the following motion was passed unanimously:

Before the administration changes a grade or status of a student in a course with the concurrence of the instructor, an explanation must be given in writing to the instructor, or to the department chair if the instructor cannot

be reached, and to the chair of the Academic Affairs Committee of the Faculty Senate. The instructor has the right to appeal to the Academic Standards and Advising Committee and, if not satisfied, to the provost.

During the discussion questions arose about an apparent discrepancy between petition procedures at the two campuses. At Manchester, apparently, a student may petition the dean without going first to the instructor, whereas at Durham the instructor signs and approves or disapproves of the petition before sending it on to the dean. We left it last year that Ted Kirkpatrick, Associate Dean of COLA, would try to bring the two procedures into alignment.

We recently heard from Dean Kirkpatrick and from Dan Reagan, Associate Dean at Manchester, that when a student petitions to withdraw (late) from a course the instructor must be consulted. (The instructor is not allowed to see any documentation related to physical health, mental health, or protected information.) We consider this procedure to be close enough to the procedure at Durham as to be acceptable.

We also note that the ASAC never alters a grade—only instructors may do so—so the motion passed last year is redundant in part. It is the registration status that is in question.”

VIII. Presentation by Subhash Minocha and Raina Ames on the progress of the Minors Policy. As representatives of the senate to the university Subcommittee on the Policy to Protect Minors, Subhash Minocha and Raina Ames met with Pat McCabe from Human Resources and Cathy Leach, Summer Youth Program Coordinator in the Provost’s office to continue working on the draft policies and procedures that have been developed by a Working Group on Child Safety at UNH. At the agenda committee’s request, Subhash and Raina were asked to help this group incorporate input from the faculty and maintain a connection between the group and the faculty senate. A draft proposal of this policy is nearing completion. This draft includes a set of procedures to protect minors on the UNH campus, as well as those who come into contact with them. Most institutions in the state have similar policies in place, or are working on such policies, in response to state laws regarding the protection of minors.

Subhash indicated that the path of approval is not clear at this moment, but that the next move is to send the draft policy to the provost’s office. He said that the draft has been vetted by student committees, and that input is desired from the senate. The senate chair agreed that the senate would review the draft policy once it is complete.

Essentially, the plan is to require background checks for all faculty and staff involved in programs which supervise non-student minors on the UNH campus. One of the complications to the policy includes how to categorize and deal with matriculated and non-matriculated students under the age of 18. Subhash also indicated that it seems likely to him that the checks will eventually be required of anyone who might come in contact with minors participating in programs at UNH.

A question raised was whether all students would be required to have background checks due to

the inevitable potential for contact with said minors. It was noted that the state laws in this area allow each organization to define who should be checked.

Subhash stated that the goal of the committee was to have a policy in place for the upcoming summer programs on campus. Raina Ames pointed out that there are two levels involved – the background checks required, and also a level of education and training that would be necessary for faculty and staff.

Information from these background checks would be kept in a central database. A senator expressed concern about invasion of privacy for faculty and staff members, and asked who would manage and have access to the database. It was also noted that unless faculty and staff are allowed to review the information gathered by the background checks, there is no way to know if the data being stored is accurate or not. Raina said that the main concerns discussed in the subcommittee meetings had to do with the history of incidents directly involving the injury of/to a child

The chair noted that the law regarding the protection of minors is established in the state of New Hampshire, and that similar policies for background checks are already in place in K-12 systems throughout the state. When a red flag is raised by a background check, the administration generally handles the situation in a case-by-case manner unless the flagged offense is egregious.

A senator raised the issue of international students being invited to campus and asked what kind of negative impact having a background check might have on recruitment of bright students from less westernized countries. Subhash pointed out that individuals with student visas have already had background checks run in their countries of origin to obtain their visa. He was not clear on whether those checks would meet the requirements of this policy. A question was raised whether background checks previously performed for other organizations could count here at UNH. It was noted that the draft policy indicates that checks done here should be effective for a period of three years.

A member of the agenda committee asked the actual cost of the background check, and if the results are made available to the applying individual, expressing concern that if they are not, there is the potential for a database to be established with incorrect information. Raina replied that the cost is \$70 per check. Subhash added that the policy proposes that the checks be valid for three years. It was mentioned that usually the results of such checks are not made available to the applicant, but the fact of hiring implies the “clearing” of the background check.

There were additional questions about who would conduct and pay for the checks. Raina reported that the committee recommended that HR would cover the costs going forward, although programs may be asked to contribute to the cost. A senator noted that this cost could become extraordinary, depending on the scope.

A senator asked if this policy moves the university towards a closed campus, asking if family members of faculty would need to have checks done. She commented that potential hires who are already vetted are more likely to be hired just for simplicity’s sake, which essentially invites a closing of the community circle. The conversation continued with questions about reducing accessibility of the campus to the general public, and attendant problems.

Another senator mentioned that currently teaching assistants already have background checks run, so there is already some precedent for this. Subhash talked about the difference between running checks on every person with potential contact and having training for people with potential contact with minors, noting that the state is drawing some of these defining lines. Raina asserted that the university needs to have some say as to where those lines stop.

Buzz Scherr from the Law School noted that the laws make a distinction between supervised and unsupervised gatherings, as well as events that are open to the public and those that are closed, saying that there are established limits in place.

A senator from the Education Department said that the public schools in which 320 undergraduates do their internships each year have agreed to allow the students into their classrooms with the stipulation that the UNH students are supervised by school personnel. These students are not required to have the standard district background checks run.

Raina asked if the faculty senate could offer an opinion on this policy, which would be helpful in establishing what is due diligence in these areas. The chair responded that the senate would gladly review the policy and respond to what is being proposed, but that the senate would prefer to not conflate establishing definitions with outlining policy in this matter. Subhash will send the draft on policy and procedures on to the agenda committee as the next step for senate review.

The chair thanked Subhash and Raina for their efforts in this complicated matter, noting that ultimately this policy is a matter of liability for the university.

IX. Pending report from Academic Affairs Committee on the transfer of online courses – still pending.

X. New business – there was no new business.

XI. Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned at 4:18 p.m.