

University of New Hampshire

University of New Hampshire Scholars' Repository

Faculty Senate Agendas & Minutes

Faculty Senate Documents

4-15-2013

2012-13 FACULTY SENATE - April 15, 2013 Minutes Summary

Faculty Senate

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

Recommended Citation

Faculty Senate, "2012-13 FACULTY SENATE - April 15, 2013 Minutes Summary" (2013). *Faculty Senate Agendas & Minutes*. 233.

https://scholars.unh.edu/faculty_senate_agendas_minutes/233

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
2012-13 FACULTY SENATE

APRIL 15, 2013

MINUTES SUMMARY

I. Roll – The following senators were absent: Baldwin, Connelly, Guo, Harrist, Jonas, Kaen, Kazura, LaRoche, Mebert, Minocha, Safford, Shannon and Simos. Guests were John Aber and Christina Bellinger.

II. Remarks by and questions to the provost – The provost said that, on the issue of Thompson School course renumbering, there have been some very good conversations among the COLSA dean, the Thompson School faculty, and the provost. He added that the senate chair and vice chair will speak with the Deans' Council tomorrow, about the proportion of tenure-track faculty. The provost recently spoke with the Lecturers' Council. Today he expressed the hope that the Faculty Senate would include the different types of non-tenure-track faculty in the Faculty Senate.

III. Remarks by and questions to the chair – The senate chair said that the Faculty Senate program coordinator will retire at the end of July. The senate chair said that she has been the glue that holds the senate together and that she will be greatly missed.

IV. Minutes – The minutes of the last senate meeting were approved unanimously.

V. Announcement of the UNH ADVANCE Program – The senate chair said that the kickoff for the UNH ADVANCE Institutional Transformation Event will be held on Tuesday, April 30, from 12:40 to 2:00 p.m. in the Granite State Room of the Memorial Union Building at UNH. The keynote speaker will be Dr. Patrice McDermott. The event offers a national perspective of the National Science Foundation ADVANCE project and an overview of ADVANCE implementation at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County. The event will include a panel discussion on mobilizing UNH ADVANCE, moderated by Dr. Christine Shea, UNH Vice Provost for Faculty Development and Inclusive Excellence. Panelists will include Dr. Karen Graham, Professor and Executive Director of UNH ADVANCE; Dr. Wayne Jones, Professor of Materials Science and Engineering at the University of Michigan; Dr. Patrice McDermott, Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County; Dr. Samuel Mukasa, Dean of the UNH College of Engineering and Physical Sciences; and Dr. Charles Zercher, Chair of the UNH Department of Chemistry. This is an invitation to come to the kickoff event of this new initiative and to learn more about the project and offer ideas on the policies and practices that will shape it. In October of 2012, UNH received a grant from the National Science Foundation to initiate sustainable institutional transformation with an overall goal of increasing the number, retention, and success of women faculty, primarily but not solely in the STEM disciplines of science, technology, engineering and mathematics, by empowering women faculty to succeed and establishing quick-action ability for retention.

VI. Teaching Evaluation Form Implementation Committee's motion on web-based evaluations for all courses – On behalf of the Teaching Evaluation Form Implementation Committee, Barbara White presented a motion as follows.

The committee recommends making a gradual transition from paper/pencil-based evaluation to electronic web-based evaluation for all courses over a time period sufficient to establish

comparability between the methods. Once comparability has been assessed, changes or additions to the question set will be explored (through field testing). Departments and other academic units for the pilot will be selected by consultation between department chairs and deans, as to which departments and programs participate in the pilot. For compelling reasons, in keeping with current policies on exemptions, individual faculty may request of their chair an exemption from the pilot. Such a request must be approved by the dean.

The rationale of the motion is as follows.

The ad hoc committee charged with revising the teaching evaluations for UNH courses has, after careful consideration and study, defined two critical issues upon which we need to make decisions. The first is how to make a transition to on-line delivery. It is the committee's opinion that UNH will likely ask us to move in this direction and that the faculty has the opportunity now to shape how this transition occurs. The second issue before the committee is revision of the questions asked in the evaluation. Heeding expert advice and suggestions given to the committee, we recommend that each of these important issues be handled separately. Due to the timely need of moving to web-based course evaluations for e-UNH courses, we recommend handling web-based evaluations first. The recommended time to assess transition effects on the different method of evaluation is four semesters. Once we have an assessment plan implemented for web-based course evaluations, we will, in the next year, present suggestions on evaluation questions to the senate.

The committee, by a vote of seven to one, agreed to bring this motion forward to the senate, based on the following factors. (1) The committee sought feedback from all faculty on the following question. "For the evaluation of traditional 'face to face' classes, would you favor a move to a fully on-line course evaluation system, providing the following two conditions could be met, that student completion of the form would be at or above current levels and that assurance of confidentiality would be at or above current levels?" Though there were some departments and individuals that stated that they did not support such a move, a majority of the faculty and departments that responded to the question were in favor of the transition to web-based teacher evaluations. (2) Based on consultations with various UNH faculty, staff and administrators with expertise in fields related to surveys and teaching excellence, as well as research provided by the team working on teacher evaluations for e-UNH courses, the committee concluded that the overall quality of evaluation responses would not be diminished by a move to a web-based system. (3) The primary concern faculty expressed about web-based teacher evaluations was centered on completion rates. The committee concluded that there were several models of incentives used, by institutions around the country for web-based teacher evaluations, that could easily be utilized by UNH to achieve acceptable results within the range of the current completion rate (76%). Some incentives (that the student does not receive the grade until the evaluation has been completed, for example) can assure a near 100% completion. (4) Web-based evaluation systems offer far greater flexibility to easily construct sets of questions that can include university-wide questions, college-wide questions and questions specific to course categories (Discovery, Inquiry, large survey classes, etc.). Most faculty members are in favor of having a system with this amount of flexibility. There is no cost effective way this can be achieved using a paper system. (5) Web-based systems make it far easier for instructors to

create and execute their own questions. (6) Web-based systems allow teachers of courses as well as chairs and administrators easily and quickly to analyze the course evaluation data in multiple ways. (7) Research has not revealed that confidentiality is in any way compromised when utilizing a web-based evaluation system. (8) Though there may not be a drop in the overall cost of a web-based system, from a sustainability viewpoint, the elimination of the paper and energy used for the current system will be substantial.

The motion will be sent to the senators on email. The motion presenter said today that initially the web-based course evaluations would be tried without incentives, to see if that results in about the same completion rate (76%) as with the current system. If not, there are various incentive options which might be used. A senator asked if students, who had stopped attending the course but had not formally withdrawn, would be sent the evaluation; and he added that including such evaluations could significantly skew the results. The motion presenter replied that there might be ways to avoid requesting evaluations from those students, if the university decided to do that. Such concerns are one reason for starting the change with a pilot program which should last about four semesters. Perhaps the instructor could tell the Blackboard system which students stop attending the course. A faculty member from the law school said that the law school has a 75% return rate now for on-line course evaluations. The motion presenter suggested that faculty who are coming up for promotion and tenure might want to opt out of switching to the new evaluation system during the pilot. A professor said that his class has over one hundred students and that he does not know when students stop attending, and he added that the students who attend class regularly do better in the course and are better qualified to evaluate the course. The motion presenter noted that faculty in some large classes (hers as an example) do take attendance, and so it may be possible in some courses to align attendance with evaluations.

A senator pointed out that approving the above motion would mean that two or three years would pass before the questions on the course evaluations could be changed. The presenter replied that, in a good experiment, only one item is changed at a time. She added that the committee recommends changing first to a web-based evaluation system, because that is more time sensitive and because the feedback varied widely on the proposed question changes. Some faculty like and some dislike the current evaluation questions, and there is great disparity. A senator said that, if less than five evaluations are returned for a course, then the university should not tabulate those evaluations, because small samples may be meaningless. The presenter said that the colleges/departments might decide about this issue and that it might be good to bring this up later when the revision of the questions is considered. The senate chair said that this motion will lie over for consideration and a vote at the next senate meeting, and he asked that senators consult with their departmental colleagues in the meantime.

VII. UCAPC's report on RCM inter-unit problems – On behalf of the University Curriculum and Academic Policies Committee, Christina Bellinger, the committee chair, reported on the charge to monitor RCM III by specifically considering inter-unit problems and the ways in which strategic initiatives will influence the fiscal health of academic programs and to report the committee's findings to the Faculty Senate. UCAPC decided that the most efficient method of pursuing information on this matter was to ask the associate deans of the colleges, who monitor the curricula of their own colleges and the other colleges and what impacts or influences the

colleges are experiencing from strategic initiatives. Only one associate dean responded, and his concerns reflect those already discussed among UCAPC members and in the Faculty Senate.

One concern is that “each proposal from a school would require a negotiation between units of the indirect cost return”. This point appears to be directed at the interdisciplinary schools and institutes and has been thoroughly discussed in UCAPC’s reports to the Faculty Senate on the General Policy on Interdisciplinary Schools and the Marine School Proposal and by the members of the Faculty Senate. According to the General Policy for Interdisciplinary Schools at the University of New Hampshire, initial financial resources allocated to an interdisciplinary school will be negotiated by the deans of the affected schools and the provost. Subsequent budgets will be submitted by the director of the school to the provost or designee and the Advisory Council, which will include the dean(s) and director(s) of the allied units. Clear MOUs describing the financial arrangements between the schools and the other units shall be developed at the time of establishment. In the Marine School proposal, there is a specific statement that indirect cost recovery will be distributed per RCM formula.

A second concern is that “there is a very real potential of adding to the already considerable workload of the BSCs.” UCAPC did not consider the impact of strategic initiatives on the BSCs. A third concern is that “there is a possibility for a burden on the college’s curriculum, in both the core and the major curricula. Those curricula are carefully calibrated to meet existing demand with minimal resources at present. Any disruption to the existing, delicate balance between demand and available resources could have unintended and unwelcome consequences”. This also seems to point to the interdisciplinary schools and institutes and is a concern that is shared by members of UCAPC and the Faculty Senate. There is a statement in the General Policy for Interdisciplinary Schools at the University of New Hampshire requiring that MOUs address the relationship to existing curricula and to commitments within the colleges to meet course offering requirements. This is an area where the associate deans and directors will have to be vigilant when reviewing proposals and constructing MOUs. UCAPC will also continue to monitor proposals. In the case of the Marine School Proposal, it is clear that most of the courses are already being taught in colleges and will remain in the colleges.

Today the UCAPC chair said that when each new school is proposed, UCAPC should review the issues expressed in the first and third concerns stated above. She added that UCAPC has not considered the issue of increase in the work load of the Business Service Centers. A senator said that the Faculty Senate had stated that the MOUs should be made public or available to the Faculty Senate. He said that UCAPC helps adjudicate disagreements between or among schools and colleges and that he believes that UCAPC could anticipate a problem and review it, before a program with potentially negative impacts is implemented. The UCAPC chair replied that the associate deans closely monitor the issues expressed in the third concern.

VIII. Report on NEASC self study – Lisa MacFarlane and Judy Robb gave an update on the UNH self-study draft for the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) review and asked for the help of all tenure-track, clinical, research and extension faculty, all full-time instructional staff, all full-time PAT and Operating Staff, and all graduate and undergraduate students, to view the rough draft materials and add comments on the UNH self study for regional (NEASC) accreditation. The NEASC visit has been rescheduled to March 30 through April 2,

2014; and the new visiting chair will be Dan Fogle, who is past-president of the University of Vermont. An initial draft is available on Blackboard for review and comments. Please give feedback on the self study, including all the eleven standards or those which are most interesting to you. The team has removed from the draft and from the blog some statements which were proprietary or confidential in nature, which might harm or embarrass members of our community, or which were inappropriate to the draft; but those details will be accounted for in the final version; and all responses to the draft will be considered. Please remember that any feedback you give on the blog will be public. Around the time of the NEASC visit in 2014, there will be a UNH self-study website that is password protected. UNH will send the draft to NEASC six weeks before the NEASC visit. The collection of data will stop on 6/30/2013. By October 1, an improved draft will be available for comment; and faculty and staff will be informed of how to access that draft. The final draft has a limit of 100 pages but can have more supporting documents. The visiting team will meet with faculty and staff and will expect them to be informed about the self-study process. The visiting team may want to meet with the Faculty Senate, and that meeting could be at the usual senate meeting time but might be on a Monday when the senate does not normally meet. Every academic program can decide on its program goals and assessment methods, as long as the program can document that the goals are being accomplished. Also, each department needs to document in advance the course syllabi and the faculty vitae.

IX. Academic Affairs Committee's motion on renumbering of Thompson School courses – On behalf of the Academic Affairs Committee, Michael Ferber presented today's motion, saying that it is essentially the same as the motion he brought to the Faculty Senate on 10/22/1012. **The motion is that the Thompson School may renumber its remaining 200-level courses, to bring them into alignment with the 400-level and 500-level course numbers at UNH. The rationale is the following.**

In response to a motion from the faculty of the Thompson School, followed by letters from Regina Smick-Attisano, Director of the Thompson School, and from Timothy Barretto, Chair of the Thompson School Faculty Executive Committee, the Academic Affairs Committee brings the above motion to the UNH Faculty Senate. This effort has a surprisingly long history, about two decades. A senate motion in April of 2005 to renumber the courses failed in a close vote, largely, it seems, because WSBE was then worried that transferring credits from 200-level Thompson School courses might affect WSBE accreditation, then in progress. (This matter seems no longer to be a source of great concern.)

Already about a fourth of all Thompson School courses are numbered in the 400s, and a handful are in the 500s to accommodate UNH students who take Thompson School courses. The result is a confusing double system, whereby a student might take several courses at the 400-level, or even the 500-level, and then take a capstone course in the 200s. Students and parents have complained, with some justice.

Our motion would not affect the criteria for transferring credits. When a student applies to UNH after a year or two at the Thompson School, his or her transcript would be evaluated by the admissions office in the same way that all transfer student

transcripts are evaluated; and then by the same token the administrator of the student's major would decide what courses will count toward what major requirements. The motion is to allow the Thompson School to renumber its courses in a more rational manner; it is an internal housekeeping measure. At a meeting on April 9, 2013, the dean of COLSA and the provost agreed with this motion.

The AAC chair said that the COLSA dean, Thompson School faculty, and the provost discussed the matter and agreed to the motion. Because this substantive motion has previously been presented to the senate, the vote can be held today. A senator said that, in 2005, WSBE faculty were concerned that passing such a motion might affect WSBE's accreditation; and he said that this is still a concern for the faculty of the Paul College of Business and Economics, because the 400 and 500-level Thompson School business courses would not be approved by the Paul College faculty. The AAC chair said that the Paul College faculty could refuse to accept these courses for fulfilling the requirements of the Paul College majors. The senator from Paul College said the accrediting body accredits the whole university rather than departments or colleges. A Thompson School senator pointed out that Thompson School courses are clearly designated as associate degree courses and that Thompson School students are treated as external transfer students if they apply to enter a UNH baccalaureate degree program. She added that currently the Thompson School course numbering is very inconsistent and also that many Thompson School courses are even numbered lower than remedial-level courses. **The motion passed with twenty-nine ayes, two nays and 2 abstentions.**

X. Resolution about the UNH Library – **On behalf of the Agenda Committee, Todd DeMitchell presented a resolution of support for the UNH Library collections. The motion is the following.**

Whereas library resources are a central and crucial element in the teaching and research activities of a university; and whereas the Library of the University of New Hampshire has been subject to significant fiscal constraint for a number years, including (according to the report of the Library Committee of the Faculty Senate on February 25, 2013) flat funding of collection development since 2009, despite steadily rising costs; be it resolved that the Faculty Senate hereby expresses its concern over the fiscal condition of the UNH Libraries and urges the university to find ways to keep the library collections and data resources strong and vital contributors to the academic mission of the university.

Thelma Thompson proposed a friendly amendment to change the final phrase to include: "and urges the university to find ways to keep the library collections and data resources and library faculty and staff as strong and vital contributors to the academic mission of the university." The motion presenter accepted the friendly amendment, because the 2/25/13 Library Committee report included concerns about declining faculty and staff. The Faculty Senate passed the amended motion with a vote of twenty-five ayes, zero nays, and one abstention.

XI. Academic Affairs Committee's report on cheating in on-line courses – Michael Ferber presented the Academic Affairs Committee's interim report on cheating in on-line courses. The

report was sent to the faculty senators on email on 4/2/2013. After discussing information on cheating, the report concluded that there can be little doubt that for many years a large proportion of students at universities and colleges across the country and throughout the world have cheated in courses of every sort - large and small, traditional, on-line, and hybrid. There are techniques ranging from clever examination questions to Skype-like cameras that make e-course cheating harder. Advice about the techniques is made available to all on-line instructors at UNH, but no techniques are foolproof. Even if a student takes a final exam on-line while sitting in front of a camera mounted on his or her computer, it would be very difficult for the camera to detect a link between that computer and a computer in the next room where someone else is pondering the same exam and sending tips to the student.

The committee was divided on whether or not to bring a motion to the senate. Some of us thought there should be no entirely on-line undergraduate courses at UNH (that is, they should all be technically “hybrid”), and other committee members sympathized but thought that the uproar such a motion would cause, if it passed the senate, would be too great. So the committee is bringing recommendations instead; but we underscore their urgency and seriousness; and as we consider this question in the future we may propose a motion or two. We think that the only sure solution is to require that all on-line undergraduate courses include at least a final examination in a face-to-face setting, and we recommend that instructors build this into their courses. As we pondered the implications of that idea, it occurred to us that perhaps we should require such an examination for all on-line transfer courses as well, at the student’s expense; that is, a faculty member here would examine, orally or in writing (orally might be better), a student who wished to receive UNH credit for an on-line course taken elsewhere, unless the student could demonstrate that it had a face-to-face component, including tests. Possibly even a massive on-line open course (MOOC) might count, as long as a similar examination took place and for which the examining faculty member would be compensated by the student. We recommend that departments consider such options, within the parameters they have agreed on, regarding how many and what sort of on-line courses to allow for their majors. Short of requiring such an exam, we can only recommend that instructors of on-line courses be sure to get some training or advice about anti-cheating measures and apply as many of them as they can bring themselves to do. There are lengthy documents full of tips. To apply enough of them would seem to demand intensive labor, but there may be no choice but to do so. Today senators said that many colleges have on-line directives on what faculty can do to reduce cheating.

XII. Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned.