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President Huddleston's Response To AAUP Vote

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A vote of this nature is a tactic used in a difficult labor dispute. It represents the level of frustration faculty feel about not having a contract, and their concern for the future of the University in uncertain times.

I know the faculty themselves are divided on the merits of this voting process – organized by one of the negotiating parties, on a rushed schedule, with hundreds of faculty not eligible to vote, and my testimony to the Senate Finance Committee misrepresented by the AAUP leadership.

The underlying issue is the uncertainty, even anxiety, everyone on campus feels – faculty, staff and students – about UNH’s appropriation from the state, and what it means to all that we do here. We want to be able to offer salary increases, to faculty and to staff. We want to preserve our core: our academic programs. We don’t want to raise tuition. So, I understand the anxiety, and I share the uncertainty. I’m concerned about how we will provide for our faculty, our staff, and our students, and protect the work we do together. But I can’t make any promises about how we do all those things until we know what the State will do.

So we have a lot of hard and important work ahead of us. That’s where our focus needs to be. I believe that we need to do this work together, through the ongoing practice of shared governance, and I am eager to move forward. I believe in the faculty, and I believe in this institution.

I am looking forward to meeting again with the Faculty Senate on Monday. I was grateful for their candor last week, and am eager to hear their ideas on how we can help each other, how I can keep communication open between us--without compromising contract negotiations.