

## **Governance Council**

**Thursday, January 27, 2011**

**10:30 PM**

**UNH 105**

Susanna Fessler, Chair

### **Minutes**

**Present:** Holly Barker-Flynn, Tom Bessette, Nan Carroll, Liang Chu, Susanna Fessler, Reed Hoyt, John Pipkin, Donna Scanlon, John Schmidt, Laura Schultz, Joette Stefl-Mabry, Daniel White

**Guests:** James Fossett, Eric Lifshin

The meeting convened at 10:30 am.

### **CHAIR'S REPORT BY SUSANNA FESSLER**

Chair Fessler noted changes in GOV's membership for the spring semester. Jane Domaracki has stepped down and her seat will be filled by Holly Barker-Flynn, Associate Director of Residential Life.

Chair Fessler provided an update on the assessment of administrators. Before the break, emails were sent to administrative offices inquiring about their willingness to participate in a pilot program. She received responses from about half of those contacted with only one office expressing interest but not committing. The chair will follow up and contact additional people.

Chair Fessler discussed the amendment that GOV had forwarded to the SEC concerning council chairs. It was tentatively on the schedule for the next SEC meeting but Chair Lifshin indicated it may have to be postponed. Most GOV members were in agreement that the amendment should go forward as planned and not be postponed. If the amendment is presented to the SEC in January, the soonest it could go to the Senate floor for a vote would be March 14th.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes of December 10 were approved with minor changes.

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

### **Membership for Budget Advisory Group IV:**

Senate Chair Eric Lifshin and UPPC Chair James Fossett were in attendance for the discussion. Provost Phillips was unable to attend. Chair Fessler said that in addition to meeting with Bill Hedberg over the winter break to discuss the membership of BAG4, the three chairs have had discussions via email over the past week to review the membership of the next consultative group regarding the budget.

On Monday of this week Chair Fessler received a proposed slate, attached to an email from President Philip, which largely comprises the BAG3 membership. The President asked that GOV review this slate, approving or disapproving of the members, and reply by the end of the week.

Background of the proposed slate: BAG 3 members were asked if they wished to continue and the majority agreed to do so, however, some replacements were required to keep the total number of committee members the same as the last consultative group. The proposed slate included the UPPC membership (including those UPPC members who were recently appointed to fill vacancies left at the end of the fall semester); new student representatives (again, to replace vacancies); and recommended names from CAS/Humanities-Arts at the President's suggestion.

In conversations Chair Fessler has had with Provost Phillips and Vincent Delio, there was agreement from all parties that by including the UPPC membership in BAG4, a combination of consultative bodies would be present according to the Bylaws, Section 2.4.1 and 2.5. SUNY Senator White pointed out that a key part of section 2.5 is that ad hoc groups do not speak for the Senate. Chair Fessler acknowledged that, and clarified that section 2.4.1, however, does provide for consultation with the Senate. To address concerns about BAG4 not reporting to the Senate beyond the regular Council reports of UPPC, Chair Fessler earlier requested an official reporter from BAG4, appointed by GOV, to report back to the faculty on a regular basis after each time that BAG4 meets. The Provost and Mr. Delio agreed to this. A discussion ensued about whether the reporter would report to the Senate or the Executive Committee and the limitations of what that person would be able to report. Senate Chair Lifshin said he believed the charge to BAG4 would include finer budget details than BAG3, precluding the reporter from providing too much information.

Dan White noted that what was most important was whether the membership of BAG4 was representative of the Senate and faculty.

Chair Fessler returned the conversation to the charge of GOV which is to vote on the slate. She said that, in her the reply to the President, suggestions could be made about the finer issues, such as what form the reporting would be. Chair Lifshin said that GOV was about to endorse an important committee and stressed the importance of developing a sense as to the purpose of that committee. Reed Hoyt referred to University Senate President Ken O'Brien's address to

the Senate where he suggested the group make their recommendations to the President and then walk away from the final decision making process. UPPC Chair Fossett said that in terms of the group's charge, it was important for him to know since he needs to be able to tell the council what their role is. The argument for BAG4 was to obtain a broader range of constituencies and representation of campus opinions. Chair Fossett believes that this consultation process will more accurately reflect the current circumstances.

Secretary Bessette reminded GOV that what the Senate, and what BAG4, does is only advisory. In BAG3, most of the discussion focused on CAS, and ITS where the CIO made decisions about cuts. BAG3 did not make specific recommendations. UPPC Chair Fossett said that the consensus of BAG3 was to avoid across the board cuts and preserve the university's strengths. Chair Lifshin said that was consistent with the documents from Middle States and the Strategic Plan. Chair Fossett said there needs to be some sense of what constitutes responsible advice and GOV's job is to decide if the group will be sufficiently representative beyond the Senate.

Chair Lifshin said the groups he had been involved with, such as Middle States, were well represented and provided very complex and interesting views of activities. He cautioned against getting into a situation where the argument will be over the definition of consultation. He suggested the function of BAG4 could be to have the administration make specific recommendations on internal structures and functions. Once those recommendations are made, those involving academic matters should be addressed by BAG4 using the documents from Middle States, Strategic Plan, etc. as a ruler to measure those recommendations.

Laura Schultz said determining the charge of BAG4 could make populating it difficult and it could be viewed that the group was populated with those who would advocate for their own group. She said GOV should have confidence in its recommendations.

GOV discussed whether or not administrators should be part of BAG4. Some BAG3 members felt that the process was orchestrated and that could be used as an argument against having administrators to be part of BAG4. By having administration represented, BAG4 could be viewed as creating a situation in which administrators are advising themselves.

GOV members then proceeded to go through the proposed slate of members, conducting a line by line vote. They approved 34 of the 43 suggested members. In addition, they suggested that no one unit should have multiple representation and that high-level administrators should not be included. In addition, two recommendations were made from a list (Provided by the President) of individuals from CAS/Humanities-Arts. GOV also concluded that James Fosset, as chair of UPPC and a member of BAG4, will provide reports to Senate Secretary Bessette, who will then disseminate them to the SEC and the Senate. Chair Fessler will compile the voting results into a reply to President Philip, and copy that reply to GOV

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 12:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Gail Cameron, Recorder