

Preamble:

The purpose of this charter is to codify, in one document, the structure and operations of the Discovery Committee, which was created by UNH [Faculty Senate Motion XIII-M11](#) (AY 2008-09) and modified by subsequent motions passed by Faculty Senate, and as approved by changes to the Faculty Senate Constitution, which is the overall governing document. This charter also codifies previously *ad hoc* organizational details. Future changes, as adopted by the Faculty Senate, will be made as amendments to this charter.

Generally, language from the original motions has been used in this charter with suitable grammatical changes and amendments that reflect current practices as approved by the Faculty Senate. Organizational details, such as reporting requirements, the election of a vice- chair, and clarification of voting and non-voting members, which were not previously specified, are also made explicit.

The Discovery Committee:

[Faculty Senate Motion XIII-M11](#) (AY 2008-09) states: “With the Faculty Senate's passage of the Discovery Program it is necessary to call into being a committee, composed mostly of faculty, to review and approve courses submitted for the Discovery Program. Since faculty are primarily responsible for all matters concerning curriculum and academic policy, the faculty members of this committee must be elected by faculty. The motion is guided by the 2002 report and recommendations of the General Education Study Committee; and the salient passage from that report reads as follows:

‘We recommend the creation of a UNH Discovery Program Committee representing faculty from the various schools and colleges as well as appropriate administrative representatives to assure smooth implementation.’”

Responsibilities of the Discovery Committee:

The committee's primary task is to establish and enact procedures, by which courses submitted for the Discovery Program are to be reviewed. The committee will take on other such Discovery-related tasks as its members deem necessary. This committee will enjoy the administrative support of the Discovery Office, the administrative director, and the director's staff. The committee will establish and disseminate to the faculty procedures, by which potential Discovery courses are to be reviewed, and criteria upon which judgments will be based. Though this committee may wish to work closely with the Faculty Senate's Academic Affairs Committee, and with the Provost's office, the UNH Discovery Committee will have the final authority in reviewing and approving courses.

Discovery Committee Structure and Organization

Name of committee:

Discovery Committee

Relation to Faculty Senate:

The Discovery Committee is a permanent committee of the Faculty Senate with specific powers related to the Discovery Program. The UNH Discovery Committee has final faculty level authority in reviewing and approving Discovery courses.

Clarified by [Faculty Senate Motion XX-M14](#) (AY 2015-16)

The Discovery Committee shall work closely with the Academic Affairs Committee and/or other cognizant standing committee of the Faculty Senate as may be determined by the Senate or Agenda Committee.

As a committee of the Faculty Senate, the Discovery Committee shall respond to such charges as the Senate and/or Agenda Committee shall from time-to-time make.

The Discovery Committee shall report all decisions to the Senate's Agenda Committee in a timely fashion. In addition, at the end of each academic year, the Discovery Committee shall provide the Senate with a full written report of the Discovery Committee's decisions, cases, and activities during that year.

The Faculty Director of the Discovery Program shall report to cognizant administrators and departments.

The Discovery Program should be reviewed every five years by the Faculty Senate.

The Committee is empowered to:

1. review all Discovery courses for academic standards and inform departments should it judge any to have fallen below reasonable university standards,
2. track and report to, and discuss with, departments any changes in syllabi and personnel for Inquiry 444 and Inquiry Attribute courses,
3. conduct category description reviews of the current categories and make recommendations to the Faculty Senate for possible changes in the language in order to clarify the parameters of the categories and SLOs,
4. review student petitions for variance in academic policy pertaining to Discovery requirements, as per [Faculty Senate Motion XV-M11](#) (AY 2010-11), and
5. review all courses (e.g., courses in the Dual Major in Sustainability) which would otherwise have only a single level (program, department, etc.) of faculty review, regardless of being Discovery courses, or not. The Discovery Committee may consult with faculty experts on non-Discovery course proposals as needed.

A. Membership

As per [Faculty Senate Motion XIII-M11](#) (AY 2008-09), the Discovery Committee shall consist of two faculty members from COLA and one faculty member each from PCBE, CHHS, CEPS, COLSA, the Library, and UNH-M. Committee members will serve for three-year terms. There is no limit to the number of consecutive terms any member may serve. After the first three-year term, subsequent terms will be staggered according to procedures the committee will establish. The Faculty Senate shall administer the election. Faculty members will be elected by the units they are to represent by those faculty eligible to vote for Senators under the Faculty Senate Constitution.

Non-tenure track faculty (“CCLEAR faculty”), who are eligible under the Faculty Senate Constitution to vote and serve on the Senate may serve on the Discovery Committee with some restrictions, as stated in [Faculty Senate Motion XIX-M12](#) and [Faculty Senate Motion XIX-M13](#) (AY 2014-15).

1. All faculty eligible to serve in the Faculty Senate who do not currently hold academic administrative positions are eligible to serve.
2. In addition to these elected faculty members, the committee will include, as a voting member, a Faculty Senate representative (who need not be a senator but must be a faculty member) selected by the Faculty Senate Agenda Committee.
3. The committee will also include the following ex-officio non-voting members: the Registrar, a representative from the Provost's Office, a representative from the Honors Program, and a representative from Academic Technology. The Faculty Director of the Discovery Program is also an ex-officio member. The Faculty Director of the Discovery Program may vote only in the case of a tie among voting committee members or in the absence of a quorum. The quorum requirement is that of the Faculty Senate.

B. Organization

1. The Chair of the Discovery Committee shall be ex officio the Faculty Director. The Faculty Director shall be selected from eligible faculty through a search conducted by the Provost's Office.
2. The Discovery Committee shall elect a Vice-Chair from among the voting members of the Discovery Committee to preside should the Faculty Director be absent. The Vice-Chair may appoint a Chair pro tempore, also to be chosen from among the voting members of the Discovery Committee, should the elected Vice-Chair be unable to preside over a meeting where the Faculty Director is absent. The Vice-Chair shall advise and consult with the Faculty Director between regularly scheduled meetings.
3. The Discovery Committee shall normally meet every two weeks during the Fall and Spring semesters. The Committee shall have additional meetings if a) the Chair or Vice-Chair deems it necessary, b) should urgent business arise outside of the regular academic terms, or c) should Faculty Senate business necessitate additional meetings.

History of Faculty Senate motions regarding Discovery:

Faculty Senate Motions establishing the Discovery Program, Discovery Committee, and early adjustments:

- i. [Faculty Senate Motion XIII-M8](#) re: Discovery program core requirements (AY 2008-09)
- ii. [Faculty Senate Motion XIII-M9](#) re: Discovery program identity attribute (AY 2008-09)
- iii. [Faculty Senate Motion XIII-M10](#) re: Discovery program interdisciplinary attribute (AY 2008-09)
- iv. [Faculty Senate Motion XIII-M11](#) re: Discovery program committee
- v. [Faculty Senate Motion XV-M11](#) re: Discovery program exemptions (AY 2010-11)
- vi. [Faculty Senate Motion XVII-M5](#) re: transfer credits and INQ (AY 2012-13)

A series of Faculty Senate Motions were adopted by the Faculty Senate in AY 2015-16 as a result of the first five-year review of the Discovery Program process, one of which, [Faculty Senate Motion XX-M25](#), expanded the Discovery Committee's oversight authority.

- i. [Faculty Senate Motion XVII-M12](#) re: course review for changes in mode or time (AY 2012-13)
- ii. [Faculty Senate Motion XIX-M3](#) re: initiating Discovery five-year review (AY 2014-15)
- iii. [Faculty Senate Motion XX-M21](#) re: Discovery writing and QR requirements remaining unchanged (AY 2015-16)
- iv. [Faculty Senate Motion XX-M22](#) re: discontinuing Discovery dialogue (AY 2015-16)
- v. [Faculty Senate Motion XX-M23](#) re: leaving Discovery categories unchanged (AY 2015-16)
- vi. [Faculty Senate Motion XX-M24](#) re: allowing double counting of Discovery categories (AY 2015-16)
- vii. [Faculty Senate Motion XX-M25](#) re: Discovery having advisory capacity to ensure that the quality of Discovery classes remains high (AY 2015-16)
- viii. [Faculty Senate Motion XX-M26](#) re: prohibiting forced decommissioning Discovery classes to offer new courses (AY 2015-16)
- ix. [Faculty Senate Motion XX-M27](#) re: encouraging even distribution of Discovery seats (AY 2015-16)
- x. [Faculty Senate Motion XX-M28](#) re: positive advocacy of Discovery (AY 2015-16)

A series of Faculty Senate motions were passed by the Faculty Senate in AY 2017-18 to address easing transfer students completing Discovery requirements.

- i. [Faculty Senate Motion XXII-M6](#) re: adopting revised Discovery charter (2017-18)
- ii. [Faculty Senate Motion XXIII-M13](#) re: online INQ attribute courses (AY 2018-19)
- iii. [Faculty Senate Motion XXIII-M17](#) re: initiating Discovery five-year review (AY 2018-19)

- iv. [Faculty Senate Motion XXIII-M25](#) re: awarding Transfer and Study Abroad Discovery credit (AY 2018-19)
- v. [Faculty Senate Motion XXIII-M26](#) re: awarding Discovery credit for transferred 2.5 credit courses (AY 2018-19)

A second five-year review of Discovery was initiated in AY 2019-2020 by way of the Faculty Senate ad hoc Discovery Review Committee (DRC). The following motions resulted:

- i. [Faculty Senate Motion XXV-M20](#) re: recommitting and creating a new ad hoc committee to reassess DRC recommendations (AY 2020-21)
- ii. [Faculty Senate Motion XXVI-M1](#) re: endorsing formation of the ad hoc General Education Review Committee (GERC) (AY 2021-22)
- iii. [Faculty Senate Motion XXVI-M10](#) re: endorsing recommendations of General Education Review Committee to forego accepting the DRC recommendations.

Work moving forward will continue to evolve the Discovery Program to implement the provision of excellent general education to the University of New Hampshire community.

Charter approved by UNH Faculty Senate: February 18, 2018

Revised charter language approved by Discovery Committee: April 27, 2022 by a vote of 8 Y, 0 N, 0 Abstain