

UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST
OFFICE OF THE FACULTY SENATE

Presiding Officer Robert Wilson called the General Faculty Meeting to order on September 28, 2007 at 3:30 p.m. in the Campus Center, Room 101.

I.

Introduction of any Officers of the University, Members of the board of Trustees, or representatives of State government who may be present.

Philip Johnston, Newly-Elected Member of the Board of Trustees (by telephone) – Thanks very much for inviting me. I chair the Blue Cross/Blue Shield Foundation and we are having a Board retreat. Unfortunately, I will have to get off fairly soon. I just want to say how thrilled I am to be on the UMass Board of Trustees, and I'm an alum of the Amherst campus as is my wife. We met there and had a little romance which turned into a lengthy romance and our son is an alum as well. We all care very deeply about the Amherst campus and the University as a whole. When Deval Patrick asked me what I wanted to do in his administration after his election, I said "you know, I think I would really like to help UMass over the next few years." So, here I am. I'm anxious to help and I know there has been some excitement during the past few months and, hopefully, we can get past all that and be on the road to an even greater University. I'm glad to be with you.

Ernest May, Secretary of the Faculty Senate – Thank you very much Phil and we look forward to working with you. I know we're looking forward to have you come out and meet with faculty leadership and administrators and to tour the campus in October. So, thank you for agreeing to serve on the Board and we look forward to your support.

Mr. Johnston – We go out to Amherst often, so I'm pretty much up to speed in terms of what's happening, but I would love to sit down with faculty members and students and have a give and take about what's been happening and how we can move forward most effectively. So, I look forward to that.

James Karam, Newly-Elected Member of the Board of Trustees – I really don't know how lucky you are, but I'm here in any event! I love being described as a new Trustee on a bit of a hiatus, or maybe a better term would be sabbatical. The Governor asked me to take a sabbatical for about a year and, fortunately, we have a new Governor, so as a former five-year Trustee and former Chairman of the Board, I can tell you what a pleasure it is to be here. When Ernie called and invited me on behalf of the faculty, I immediately wanted to take him up on the invitation and try to reconnect and, as Phil indicated, try to determine what has caused some of the tensions over the past year. I want you to know that I believe, very much, that trusteeship and governance in a university is very much a process of collaboration, and that's collaboration with the administration, the faculty and the students, and there is a long history and tradition of process that takes place in running a university. I used to often describe the University as a battleship. It turns slowly and, I think, there is a lot of reason for that. I look forward to working with you in the next year, hopefully bridging the gap of understanding. I said to Ernie, "I hope when I get done with today, this is more about style and not substance and, I think, we can easily correct style problems." I look forward to working with you and making this campus and the entire system the best it can be, given realistic expectations based on funding. I know we have a Governor who has really made the University a top priority. After he became Governor, I was asked to serve on his Task Force on Higher Education and saw the attention he has placed on that, and now he has started a Readiness Council and he has asked me to serve on that as it relates to UMass and the other public colleges. I look forward to doing that and part of that is really learning and listening to you today, and that's why I'm glad to be here.

Secretary May – Having observed the Board for a long time, I know Jim is a very passionate advocate for public higher ed and very effective, too. He's well known in Boston and the State House, and so we have a very strong voice back on the Board working for the University and for this campus and all the campuses.

Thomas W. Cole, Jr., Interim Chancellor – I am delighted to be here as well. This is my first full faculty meeting. I attended the meeting of the University Senate and I look forward to listening to you as well. I am particularly pleased that Jim Karam is here. We had a chance to talk briefly earlier and we know we are going to have a very

good dialogue going forward for the rest of this year. I think it bodes well for this campus and I look forward to that dialogue as we continue to move the system forward.

II.

Report on developments since the last session of the General Faculty Meeting on June 21, 2007.

Secretary May – You have in your hand one of the handouts, a listing of all the meetings and actions taken by the General Faculty, the Executive Advisory Council, the Rules Committee and the Intercampus Faculty Council during the summer of 2007. It's pretty long. Much of this has been widely reported in the press, and the agendas, minutes and transcripts of any of these meetings are available on the Faculty Senate web site. There is little need to rehash this material except I will answer questions later, if there are any.

It is clear that the voice of this faculty has been heard by the Governor, the Board of Trustees and the University President. Largely, as a result of these meetings and actions, it appears that the conversation may have moved away from restructuring of the system of public universities in Massachusetts, i.e., the Vision of One University Plan, towards a conversation about collaborations of various kinds. This is the direction it seems to be headed as of the last few days, but we do need to remain vigilant. To be specific, the Trustees originally announced for November 5th and 6th a closed retreat which will receive a report and result in action steps, apparently a follow up to the notorious Trustee retreat of May 3rd of this year; this has now been declared "open."

Also a grant proposal which would have had the effect of centralizing the assessment of General Education, feared by some to be a first step toward a centralized system curriculum, has been withdrawn by Vice President Williams who writes "I have spoken with the provosts, trying to get another sense of the activity on their campuses regarding the matter of assessing learning outcomes of General Education. I have discovered that there is now a fair amount of robust conversation on the topic that far exceeds the scope and intentions of the original and revised drafts of the proposal. Thus, I am sending a memo to the provosts and chancellors saying that I have suspended further discussion and work on the original proposal because that proposal would limit the range of effort and outcome compared to the conversations that have now been engaged."

Finally, it appears that the charge of the Subcommittee of the Governor's Readiness Project tasked with studying UMass and public higher ed has focused on collaboration rather than reorganization, according to a press report which quotes Rebecca Duesser, an aid to the Governor: "When asked if governance would be a topic, Duesser said 'no.'" That is out of a recent press report, which is quite interesting. These press reports are on the table in the back of the room, and they are in today's *Gazette*.

It certainly appears that all these meetings and expressions of faculty perspective, including expressions of what we don't have confidence in, have, at the very least, resulted in the avoidance of serious harm to the University. Jim Karam used the battleship metaphor. I would say we might have been headed for the sandbar, if not the rocks and I think we've managed to steer clear.

There are so many good things happening – the capital construction program, the Amherst 250 program, the Life Sciences Initiative, just to name three, yet the political context has rarely ever been as turbulent as during this period May to September 2007. Perhaps the good stuff and the turmoil are somehow connected. We do have to try to avoid shooting ourselves in the foot. We have a way of doing that, which is not really helpful, and, after a certain point, the turmoil turns counterproductive. So, we don't want turmoil for its own sake, but, in my opinion, the tensions that we've experienced were over very serious, legitimate issues, to which the faculty was obligated to respond.

Professor Max Page, President, Massachusetts Society of Professors – Good afternoon. I just want to give a brief report on two developments and make just a couple of comments about how I think we want to proceed this year. First, I would offer a brief report on the Chancellor's Search Committee which I serve on and about seven Amherst campus representatives are on that. There is an ongoing discussion about honoring the faculty role in governance of the University and it is obviously a very important step forward, if we can get another great chancellor. The first meeting, and the discussions in advance, have given me confidence and I always say "speak in

the present moment.” I may be proved completely wrong shortly, but at least in the initial conversations with the Chair of that Search Committee, I feel it is not a rigged process. I feel it is a fair and open process. A wide range of people are on that Committee and, at the first meeting, we simply decided to engage a search firm and people were very sure that that was the right thing to do. At the next meeting, I think it will be somewhat more significant in that we will be talking actually with that search firm about what the qualities are of the kind of person we would want as a permanent chancellor and to talk about what have been the great achievements in the last four or five years and maybe places we still need to go; in other words, give a clear and honest picture of the campus. You are not going to hoodwink a great candidate here so, I think, part of the process next time is to really lay out what have been the great gains and what have been perhaps some of the problems or obstacles we face as a campus. I encourage you to communicate with me and other members of the Search Committee in advance of that to share what kind of qualities of the new chancellor as well as what you think the most important challenges are for the campus. I think that the representatives from Amherst are especially important on this Committee. We are the people actually working here, primarily faculty and students and, although we are only one third or less than one third of the actual votes on this Committee, we have a certain standing by being actually the people on the ground helping to run this University. We have an important role to play and as it gets to the point later on when we actually bring people to campus, that will be a crucial moment for people to get involved and voice their opinions. I will obviously keep you up to date and the others on the Committee will as well.

The second thing is the Readiness Project. Remember, this was something that was going on before we got involved because of the chaos of last spring, but we pushed for a committee specifically on UMass. We actually got two committees – one is focused on UMass and Public Higher Education and the other is called Public and Private Higher Education. I think the purpose of the second one, which I have been appointed to, is to look at the greater collaboration between the private and public sectors in higher education. As you will see, one of the resolutions which we will talk about in a few minutes is about our expressing the disappointment that there are no active students, faculty or staff from any of the five campuses on that committee. That said, I think we can help to shape what that committee does. The other resolution about the Readiness Project lays out some of those priorities which we would like them, and ultimately the Governor, to deal with.

I’m a historian, as some of you know which means it’s a bad, bad idea to make predictions about the future, but I’m about to do that. I follow Ernie’s sense as well that I don’t believe any major structural changes are in the offing this year. I think we were very effective in making our views known last spring. I don’t think in the year when we are searching for a permanent chancellor and when the Governor is involved in this Readiness Project that there is going to be some major, major proposal for upheaval. I think we’ve made our voices clear in that way, which means – this is my second point – that we can and must switch our tone, not only saying no to things where we need to say no to, but also beginning to back efforts at bringing substantial new resources to the campus and public higher education more generally. As a former chancellor of UMass Amherst liked to say, “it’s all about the money.” If we can bring in what the Governor is proposing, tripling the capital budget, if we can find a new dedicated source of income that we can depend on year in and year out, that will transform so much and head us down the road of making the University that we know Massachusetts deserves. That’s a debate that is being engaged and the Governor has done that by putting gambling out there, but by talking about capital, closing corporate tax loopholes, he is putting the revenue question on the table and saying “we have all these needs, how are we going to pay for them?” We have to be involved in that debate in a positive way and arguing why public education needs substantially new investment. So, as a start for this, I just want to encourage you to pick up from the back of the room a notice about our second higher education summit, PHENOM, which the public higher education network of Massachusetts which you all helped form and started on this campus, but now is statewide and has chapters in almost all 29 public campuses, is holding another higher education summit on October 26th at Framingham State College. We have some of the key figures in Massachusetts politics, including our own Stan Rosenberg, there to talk about how do we insert ourselves into this debate over new resources for public higher education. That is what I want to encourage this year – to really be at front and center, taking a positive stance on bringing more resources to the campus.

Professor Murray Eisenberg, Department of Mathematics and Statistics – I would like some speculation or actual information, if this is not too indelicate a question, on what was the cause of what has happened with the Board and the President over the past months of picking up a dagger, threatening to stab UMass Amherst, and then each time having the arm pulled back or pulling the arm back. I'm not asking for anyone to speculate on what caused the arm to be pulled back. I would like to know what caused that arm to be raised in the first place and what circumstances might have changed so that that does not happen again?

Senator Richard Bogartz, Department of Psychology – I don't know why they put the dagger down, but I know why they picked the dagger up. It's because and perhaps, present company accepted, there is a subset – I don't know how large it is – of the Trustees that are concerned with image. They think about the University in terms of the image of the University and this led them to wanting to juggle the statistics. You could juggle the statistics as to how the University of Massachusetts looks if you pool all the statistics from the various campuses. This seemed like a good idea. It would boost us up into the top fifteen. None of the other universities and systems evaluate themselves in terms of whether they are in the top ten or the top fifteen by pooling across the whole University of California, but, in the infinite wisdom of some of our Trustees, that seemed like a good idea. They looked around and they said “Gee, some top universities really have good Division 1A football teams.” They missed Harvard; they missed Yale; they missed UC San Diego in their observations, but it looked to them as if a Division 1A football team would make us look like a great university. They want us to look like a great university. It's not obvious that they want us to be a great university, but looking good is really good. So, I think some of the activity that they have engaged in has been about how we look and we have to be continually on guard that these moves to make us look so good without the substance behind it don't continue to happen.

Professor Page – This may go against common wisdom around here, but whatever was proposed, and it was certainly proposed in the wrong way and the content of it was also counterproductive, I actually don't believe it was about undermining and taking away our money and getting rid of the flagship status of UMass Amherst. I counted the number of times that “flagship” was mentioned in the Search Committee meeting the other day and I believe it was about a dozen or more. There is no question – this is the flagship; we know it, but many people with conspiracy theories would suggest that they are not, were uttering that as well. I don't think that is what it was about. Nonetheless, I think there were plans. There were visions exactly like you said that do have to do with imaging and packaging which were the wrong way to go, but I think we should also be careful. I've heard at different points around the campus things that remind me of my Kennedy assassination days. Let's trust what Ernie very eloquently last spring said, “let's forget about the words, let's look at the actions.” When the actions are bad, we have to push back. Let's not worry about a lot of talk, but when there are actions that we think are going in the wrong direction, that's when we have to respond.

Secretary May – It is about perceptions and the Board of Trustees put out an RFP last February for a consultant study that would show how we could be placed in the top ten to fifteen universities and that contract was awarded to James E. Samels and Associates, a group called the Education Alliance. They are mainly known in the world with a book called Merging Colleges for Mutual Growth. Unfortunately, they have lists of colleges which have merged; no top public 100 university has even been formed by a merger. There is Carnegie Mellon and Clark Atlanta. Our Chancellor here has happened to come from a successful example of a merger in Atlanta. I think, at the time that that contract was awarded and, if you connect the dots, then we get to May 3rd and we have the Vision for One University Plan which had some things in it and there was the proposal to bring President Wilson out here as chancellor and we had some little dust up over that. There has been quite a lot of discussion about that. That's why I think so much anxiety was created in the faculty when this closed retreat was brought up where this report by Samels who is talking about merging colleges was supposed to be delivered and then announced by Chair Tocco to be followed by action steps. In other words, nobody knows what this plan is, but we are going to receive this report and then there are going to be action steps. Now, those of us who are a little paranoid, the only way we could really see how this was going to work – how the consultant would write a report so he could collect his check, that would get us into the top ten to fifteen other than the following scenario – you actually do create a university, a single university which is geographically distributed so we would be just a geographically distributed Berkeley or something like that. We would have \$400M in research. We would have a library that, instead of being like number 105, would be like number 20 or something, if you did actually merge everything together. There would

be one president or chancellor, whatever you called him, one provost, one Music department, one Sociology department, one Chemistry department – it would just be geographically dispersed – one school of business, one school of fine arts. There are some real problems with that. The cost of doing that, just for starters, assuming it was a good idea, which I'm not sure we would agree upon, would be enormous. You would have to link everything electronically. It would be like those Infosys meetings where you would have a screen with all these faces on it, a few people in the room and about 45 faces on the wall because they would all be geographically distributed. Well, setting up an infrastructure like that – I don't know if it's \$100M, \$500M, \$1B – it would be enormous when you're talking about 53,000 students and 15,000 employees and all the rest of it. Certainly something that big is required to be developed in consultation with at least the faculty if not other people. That's the worst case scenario. The vibe I'm getting now is that the whole idea of a true consolidation like that has been transformed into talk about collaboration and that's something that has a realistic chance of some positive outcome. The institutional identities, of course, in the radically centralized model, are all pretty much sacrificed and, for this campus, it would involve a kind of reversion to the mean effect. Other campuses would have different problems with it. Everybody would have a problem with it, I think!

Professor John Kingston, Department of Linguistics – The thing that startles me a little bit is that what is happening in the last couple of weeks is very reminiscent of what happened in the spring. It seems the Trustees attempted to make action to which we object and then they back off and it strikes me that we are in a state of essentially having to be constantly vigilant to make sure that they behave themselves. This strikes me as essentially they are a fundamentally untrustworthy body if we were required to be constantly vigilant in this way. I wonder if we can really have any confidence that, if we turn our backs for a moment, something evil like this might not happen again. How do we proceed if, in fact, it's not a matter of collaboration, but instead a matter of constant vigilance on our part and fundamental misbehavior on theirs?

Secretary May – There are some new Trustees. The Board of Trustees is a dynamic political group. It's appointed entirely by the Governor. We have changes in the Governor's Office and, therefore, sometimes we get Trustees who are very much aligned with the politics of that particular Governor. So, there's quite a bit of political tension in some boards of trustees. We certainly have had that in the last year. We have new appointees to the Board. The Board is dynamic. It certainly is going to require vigilance and communication. We are going to try to have increased communication with members of the Board on an individual and a group basis to stay in touch with them. We are totally open; the campus is now totally open for visits by the Trustees. If they want to see what is going on down here, that's fine, we're happy to have them test the waters and see what's great about this place, what could be better, what challenges we face and what the strengths and non-strengths are. So, we're looking for an increased dialogue with the Trustees and I understand that they are interested in that, too.

Senator W. Brian O'Connor, Department of Biology – I sat there saying I really shouldn't say anything, but, I think, in a sense, I really should. I have been the faculty delegate for the past eleven years, so I have sat through more Trustee meetings than Jim Karam has, which is a record, I think. I have to say that I have yet to meet a Trustee who didn't really care tremendously about the University of Massachusetts, be it this campus or be it any one of the other four. Their hearts are certainly in the right place. At times, maybe their judgment was wrong, but, in the long run, I really think that they are sensitive to us. They know that we are the University. I have reminded some of them sometimes, but we have to remember that they are our bosses. We do report to them. I sometimes think we forget that. I am confident that what happened in the past year was just a blip. I really think there were some Trustees who got maybe a little bit carried away, but, in the long run, they are very reasonable people. They are incredibly busy people. I don't want to stand up here and say I'm defending them, but in a way, I just feel that, and Ernie did this for a long time, too, we have to be vigilant. We have to be aware of what they are doing, what their plans are and to make them aware that we want to participate. I think at times maybe we sat back and it was easier to complain than it was to participate. I think they are well aware that we are very interested in what they are doing and I really don't think that they are out to hurt us. Their goal really is that they love the University of Massachusetts. They know that I love UMass Amherst and I've told them that personally. I've been here for 41 years and I don't plan on leaving for a little while anyway, but it's a great University and they do appreciate it. I think we have to be vigilant, though, I agree, but I don't think we have to be concerned that they are going to continually pull the dagger out. I hope that's gone.

Professor Randy Phillis, Department of Biology – One of the things that I want to point out is the difference between corporate management structure and university governance structure. Corporate management structure is boss, top down, account to a certain thing, you can be fired or we can restructure. University governance structures are different and I think that one of the things that we need to keep mindful of as we think about our vigilance is that sort of three-legged stool of democracy, transparency and accountability – that the way that governance works best in a university setting is that there is democracy, there is consultation and advising from the faculty in a conversation about issues. There is transparency where the ways the decisions are made are clear, open and available. Then there is accountability that, once those things are made, once the decisions occur, that there are ways to have more dialogue about the effect and how they are playing out. I think our vigilance should be based on places where that triumvirate fails, where the Board of Trustees is secret or not democratic or is not held accountable for the decisions that they make. I think that could help guide us very well.

Professor Page – I personally think that the Board of Trustees works better when it is in line with the Governor, especially with a Governor who is investing in public higher education. There is no question that within a year, the Governor will have appointed enough people to at least have his general program in charge there. I think you are right to be vigilant, but I think that we can be confident, maybe again making predictions, but within a year, we will have a complement of Trustees who at least have been chosen by the Governor and probably more in line with his thinking in his plans for public higher education which I am hopeful for.

Secretary May – Sometimes on the campus, we get a little blurry about where the real lines of authority are. We have to remember that the Board of Trustees is our Supreme Court. On most issues, we do not have recourse to a decision of the Board except to ask them to reconsider it. So, we do have to be respectful and we have to be persuasive with the Board. It is incumbent on us to keep track of what issues they are considering and to make persuasive arguments in order that they understand the campus or the faculty perspective on issues that are coming up. That is why the job that Brian (O'Connor) does and that I did for awhile and that many other people are doing to stay in touch with the Board is very important.

III.

GF 01-08 WHEREAS Chair Tocco, at the Board of Trustees meeting on September 19, 2007, at the University of Massachusetts Lowell, announced that the Board of Trustees would hold a Retreat and private dinner on November 2-4, 2007, which, according to Chair Tocco, will result in a series of action steps for the Trustees,

BE IT RESOLVED that the Faculty and Librarians of the University of Massachusetts Amherst express their lack of confidence in this closed process, specifically with respect to the failure of the President and Board of Trustees to consult faculty and other university constituencies with respect to critical matters of long-range planning, reorganization, and other specific actions, in apparent violation of the spirit and letter of AAUP documents, Trustee governance documents, and the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law.

Secretary May – Mr. Chairman, in light of the opening of the Trustee retreat scheduled for November 5th to 6th to the public, I and the other makers of this motion withdraw this motion.

Robert Wilson, Presiding Officer – The motion is withdrawn. That withdrawal does not require a second, does not require consent or vote.

IV,

GF 02-08 That the Faculty and Librarians of the University of Massachusetts Amherst reiterate their insistence that any and all reorganization plans strictly adhere to the spirit and letter of established governance documents of the Board of Trustees, particularly the Wellman Document, requiring the full participation of faculty and other constituencies in all such planning processes, and express lack of confidence in any and all such plans created or promulgated without such participation.

Secretary May – Mr. Chairman, I move to postpone this motion until the next meeting of the General Faculty. Given the developments of the last few days, it seems that the direction has been changed. Postponing the motion allows us to re-start this motion if the need should arise, but it shows our willingness to work with the President’s Office and the Board of Trustees in their new direction and basically not to punish them for taking the turn that they have.

Senator Steven Brewer, Department of Biology – The motion contains the words “lack of confidence” and our experience has been that the media don’t pick up on nuance very well and so, if we say we pass a motion with the words “lack of confidence,” my guess is that it will be a headline on a newspaper someplace and that we will no longer be able to have a discussion about what we really meant and so I think it would be a good idea to table the motion.

This motion was tabled to the next scheduled General Faculty Meeting.

V.

GF 03-08 WHEREAS the proposal entitled “Achieving Liberal Outcomes,” which contains substantial curricular and unfunded budgetary implications, burdens and expenses for the faculty of the University of Massachusetts Amherst, was prepared by the President’s Office staff and other administrators with zero participation by faculty, thereby clearly violating faculty primary responsibility for the curriculum,

AND WHEREAS the President’s Office has refused to defer or withdraw this proposal,

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Faculty and Librarians of the University of Massachusetts Amherst express lack of confidence in this proposal as it stands and request the President’s Office to defer action until such time as an appropriate level of faculty participation from appropriate faculty curricular or General Education governance bodies from the affected campuses has been achieved.

Secretary May – Mr. Chairman, in light of the message from Vice President Williams which I read earlier, I and the makers of this motion withdraw this motion.

Presiding Officer Wilson – The motion is withdrawn. That withdrawal does not require a second, does not require consent or vote.

VI.

GF 04-08 The Faculty and Librarians of the University of Massachusetts Amherst appreciate the Governor’s creation of a subcommittee in the Readiness Project that will focus on the issues currently facing the University of Massachusetts and Public Higher Education. In light of the complexity and urgency of the many challenges that specifically confront the University however, we are keenly disappointed that this subcommittee does not include any current students, faculty, or staff from any of the five UMass campuses. It is these constituencies who have the best understanding of the needs of our public university system.

Therefore, we call on the UMass and Public Higher Education Subcommittee to hold at least one open forum on each of the five UMass campuses over the coming months so that the Subcommittee hears from people who actually learn and work at the University.

This motion was seconded and adopted.

VII.

GF 05-08 The Faculty and Librarians of the University of Massachusetts Amherst appreciate the Governor's creation of a subcommittee on UMass and Public Higher Education in the Readiness Project and call upon it to: (1) dedicate itself to a democratic, transparent, and accountable process; (2) focus on outcomes that will preserve the unique values of each university in the UMass system, including Amherst as a Research I institution that competes on a national and international scale; (3) address the most pressing problems of the university system: lack of openness and accountability in governance; inconsistent and insufficient funding; decreasing affordability; rising barriers to accessibility; serious infrastructure issues; and the reduction of the research faculty that provide students with the experiences that define a high-quality research university education.

Professor Page – Just a very brief note about this. As I was saying earlier about our needing to engage in the debate over revenues this year, I want to make an urge to keep in mind that one of the ways that we are going to be successful is if we not only advocate for funding for this campus, but for the entire system and I would argue for the entire public higher education system and that we recognize the crucial issues of affordability and accessibility. We will be successful if we recognize that as a crucial, crucial problem in this state.

Professor Eisenberg – In view of the actions taken or not taken so far today, why is there a need for the item lack of openness and accountability in governance in this list of issues?

Secretary May – We have three or four days of openness and quite a period of murkyness, so we're not ready to say that the battle has been won!

This motion was seconded and adopted.

VIII.

GF 06-08 That the Faculty and Librarians of the University of Massachusetts Amherst will reconvene this General Faculty Meeting not later than December 20, 2007, or at any other date during the Academic Year 2007-2008, with the final date to be set by the Secretary of the Faculty Senate in consultation with the Rules Committee of the Faculty Senate and the Executive Board of the Massachusetts Society of Professors.

GF 06-08 (as amended) That the Faculty and Librarians of the University of Massachusetts Amherst will reconvene this General Faculty Meeting on December 20, 2007, or at any other date during the Academic Year 2007-2008, with the final date to be set by the Secretary of the Faculty Senate in consultation with the Rules Committee of the Faculty Senate and the Executive Board of the Massachusetts Society of Professors

Presiding Officer Wilson – I will accept a friendly amendment to delete the words “not later than” with the consent of the group. It will read – “That the Faculty and Librarians of the University of Massachusetts Amherst will reconvene this General Faculty Meeting on December 20, 2007, or at any other date . . .” so that allows for a December 20th date or, if it's not necessary to have it then, to have it later or earlier in the spring. So, with the consent of the group, I will make that change.

Senator Bogartz – Is there any reason not to just say on or before?

Secretary May – December 20th is about a week after the next regular meeting of the Board of Trustees, so, if we had to comment on something, that is a date that might work. On the other hand, developments seem to come out of the blue sky sometimes that might need a response, so the members of the committee wanted to leave it open so a meeting could be reconvened at any time. So, this reflects that.

Presiding Officer Wilson – I think the purpose is to set a date and, if the date is not necessary, then to reschedule the meeting without calling a meeting, to leave open the opportunity to schedule the meeting sooner if it's necessary, but to also delay this December 20th meeting if it's not necessary to have it at that point.

This motion was seconded and adopted as amended.

Senator Maurianne Adams, SDPPS – This is the first opportunity we've had to get back together since the last General Faculty meeting of last spring. It has been an extremely busy and stressful time and I think that we should express our appreciation both to the Secretary of the Faculty Senate, Ernie May, and also to the President of the MSP, Max Page, for their vigilance and their thoughtfulness, their collaboration, their inclusivity and their wisdom in leading us through these difficult times.

Senator O'Connor – Introduced a friendly amendment. “And the staff, too.”

Senator Adams – I would also like to add that I've been here a long time. I came in 1973 and this is the first that I have seen this kind of within-campus coordination between the Faculty Senate and the Union and many people who stand on one side or another side of University politics. I think it's extraordinary and I'm very glad that, despite the difficulties that we have gone through, we have been able to pull ourselves together as a campus this way and express a single voice. So, I really want to thank all of us for this extraordinary achievement.

Secretary May – Let's focus on being persuasive and not being unnecessarily confrontational just for the sake of being confrontational. We've tried to phrase and to fashion these motions in a way that would attempt to be persuasive and we will continue to do that and work with the Board of Trustees and the political leadership of the state to produce the finest university system that we can. We may or may not be number ten or fifteen, but I hope we can have the finest university system we can based on the investment that's been made in us and I thank you all for being here and supporting this effort.

Professor Emerita Patricia Crosson, School of Education – I just wanted to point out that the Gazettenet piece that you handed out and that you were speaking to earlier – I called the Governor's Office today to ask if the charge to the Subcommittee on UMass and Public Higher Education had been completed and was ready for the members of that Subcommittee and the answer was “no.” So, I would take this with a slight grain of salt. It may be true, but it may not be.

Presiding Officer Wilson – We are officially adjourned until we reconvene.

The General Faculty Meeting stood adjourned at 4:28 p.m. on September 28, 2007.

The proceedings of this meeting are available on audiotape in the Faculty Senate Office.

Respectfully submitted,

Ernest D. May
Secretary of the Faculty Senate