

[In these minutes: Updates on proposed policies, 2003-04 chair election]

STUDENT SENATE CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE (SSCC) MINUTES

MAY 21, 2003

[These minutes reflect discussion and debate at a committee of the University of Minnesota Senate or Twin Cities Campus Assembly; none of the comments, conclusions, or actions reported in these minutes represent the views of, nor are they binding on, the Senate or Assembly, the Administration, or the Board of Regents.]

PRESENT: Judy Berning, (chair), Derek Brunsberg, Josh Colburn, Scott LeBlanc, Ryan Osero, Nathan Saete, Charles Stech, Eric Steinhoff, Dan Weiske.

REGRETS: John Amble, Levi Kary, Jim Kanten, Kari Lindeman, Tom Walsh, Jessica Weaver.

GUESTS: Robert Jones.

1. UPDATES FROM ROBERT JONES

GUNS ON CAMPUS

Robert Jones began by saying that the newly-approved conceal and carry law is creating problems across the state since it makes entities, instead of the law itself, responsible for the guns carried inside or for checking guns at the door. For the University, students are already prohibited from carrying weapons of any type on campus. The Office of the General Counsel is now reviewing policies related to prohibiting weapons related to faculty, staff, and visitors to provide for a weapons-free campus. One question yet to be resolved is whether weapons could be left in a person's car or cannot be on the premise at all.

Q: Would this be a system-wide policy?

A: Yes.

Q: Would weapon checks happen at the borders of campus? Would the University be immune to checking weapons?

A: No since the University has many borders and entries. If campus is declared a weapons-free zone, then weapon checks should not be necessary, especially if parking could be excluded.

Q: Could weapons be prohibited at the Metrodome?

A: The Vikings and Twins already prohibit guns at their events, so these types of off-campus, but University-like areas would need to be included in the policy statement.

Robert Jones said that a proposed policy will be sent to the President's Executive Committee with the goal of having something in place by fall semester at the latest.

ANTI-RIOT POLICY

Robert Jones reminded the committee that the revised Student Conduct Code was presented to the Regents for information in April. The revised Code did not have jurisdiction off-campus for violations even after a review in light of 2002 riot.

Following this year's riot, President Bruininks spoke against these actions but did not want to propose more changes to the Code. Instead, he proposed an administrative policy on inciting or participating in riots. This policy will be presented to the Regents in June for information and is expected to be approved by the administration this summer. The policy would be implemented system-wide. Currently, only Michigan and Maryland have policies of this type in place.

The policy itself would be applied to riotous events on and off campus that are in connection to a University-sponsored event. Any students violating this policy would then be charged under the Code. He then read the definition for riotous behavior that currently appears in the working draft.

Q: Will this policy lead to more administrative interpretations of the Code?

A: The administration still has concern about off campus jurisdiction in a few circumstances, such as riots. A task force will be formed this summer to focus exclusively on the off campus jurisdiction issue and under what types of behaviors it might be considered.

Q: Will students be charged under this policy for actions that do not take place in a riot situation?

A: Those situations will not be covered by this policy. While the policy will not stipulate a number needed to be considered a riot, it will be more than one angry student.

Q: Will penalties be defined by the policy?

A: Penalties will still be assessed on a case-by-case basis as is currently done under the Code.

Q: Will spectators be charged under this policy?

A: Spectators are not the target of this policy, however failing to respond to an order to disperse is included in the definition. Ohio, however, is considering charging students with a misdemeanor just for attending or observing a riot.

TUITION

Robert Jones said that tuition increases are still at the level proposed to the Regents in May, 14.8 percent in 2003 and over 13 percent in 2004. If the University receives more funding from the legislature, the funds will go towards financial aid assistance.

Q: Are these percentage increases for in-state or out-of-state tuition?

A: The percentage is based on in-state undergraduate tuition on the Twin Cities campus. The increase is not being applied across the board since some graduate and professional programs can

not afford this level of increase.

STUDENT AFFAIRS

Robert Jones said that interviews are currently being conducted for the Associate Vice Provost for Student Affairs position which June Nobbe has been occupying on an interim basis. There are currently five strong candidates in the pool. The person should be in place by July 1 and will be working closely with all student groups and would be the person to attend these types of meetings.

Members then thanked Robert Jones for the information and he left the meeting.

A member then questioned the administration's action in response to the riots. If a policy can be created to punish students under the Student Conduct Code for off-campus behavior in riots, will this be extended to other behaviors? While no one will argue that riots need to be prevented and that rioters should be penalized, it appears that this policy goes against the spirit of the Student Code and how it was explained to students before the revisions were approved. Another member noted that the Regents still have recursive action in directing the administration to repeal a policy, but that there is public support for a policy of this type.

A member then questioned how students will be informed of the new policy. Other members noted that efforts will be taken to have all students see the policy many times at the beginning of the year and whenever there is a chance that a riotous act might take place.

2. 2003-04 SSCC CHAIR ELECTION

Judy Berning began by noting that constitutional and bylaw changes are pending that reorganize the Student Senate leadership. Once approved by the University Senate in October and the Regents in November, the SSCC Chair position will no longer exist as a separate position. Therefore, whoever is elected should be focused on working with the Student Senate Chair, Dan Weiske, on merging the positions and will chair SSCC meetings until this change happens.

Q: Will the chair stipend be the same amount as last year?

A: The Student Senate received the same amount of stipend funding as last year, but would like to divert some resources to funding for the Student Affairs Committee Chair. The SSCC Chair stipend will likely be pro-rated to the time that the chair is in office.

Following nominations and questions, Scott LeBlanc was elected SSCC Chair for 2003-04.

3. OTHER BUSINESS

Judy Berning said that funding has been set aside for an SSCC retreat, which is a time for the committee to set its agenda and do planning before the school year starts. It was very effective last year and she hopes that it is done again next year. Transition meetings between leadership positions will also be taking place in the next few weeks. Lastly, she said that this was an interesting year and she thanked all the members for their service.

A member then questioned whether the University could raise funds through other means, such as lowering the on-campus drinking age or putting casinos on campus, due to the fact that the University is constitutional autonomous from the state. While this fact is true, other members did not feel that either option was best for the campus community or for fostering relations with the state.

With no further business, Judy Berning thanked all members for attending and adjourned the meeting.

Becky Hippert
University Senate