

[In these minutes: Discussion with Robert Jones, Student Alcohol Issues, Coffman Update, Reports]

STUDENT SENATE CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE (SSCC) MINUTES

OCTOBER 4, 2001

[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: Khaled Dajani (chair), Judy Berning, Ryan Brux, Daniel Buechler, Nick Cecconi, Trevor Ewanochko, Shawn Lavelle, Kari Lindeman, Matt McBlair, Rose Samuel, Jason Stingl.

REGRETS: Christina Frazier, Ryan Osero, Matthew Wohlman.

GUESTS: Deb Cran, YeeLeng Hang, Venora Hung, Robert Jones, Jeremiah Mason, Patrick Pederson.

1. DISCUSSION WITH ROBERT JONES, VICE PRESIDENT FOR CAMPUS LIFE

Robert Jones, Vice President for Campus Life, addressed the reorganization that is taking place in his office. An initiative was started by three offices, Multicultural and Academic Affairs, Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education, and Student Development, to determine how to best collaborate efforts to better serve students.

From this strategic planning process, a new structure, which was distributed, was proposed to reduce redundancy, better serve students, and bring more units under the direction of the Vice President. One office is such as Multicultural and Academic Affairs. Kathryn Brown has been serving as the Interim Associate Vice Provost for the office since Rusty Barcelo left in June. A search committee will be formed to appoint the position permanently. A second office is the First Year Experience, whose Director is LeAnn Melin. Another change is that June Nobbe is the new director of the Leadership Minor Program. With her departure from the Campus Involvement Center, that office is being restructured, to report to the Student Unions. Sally McCee has also been hired to work with MnSCU on a coordinated education system.

He then noted that the strategic planning process is going well. Six task forces were formed to focus on specific areas, such as student satisfaction evaluations and links with academics. The task force work should be done by the end of the year, with reports and recommendations provided. Campus Life will then prioritize the recommendations and fund the top initiatives up to \$100,000. Before any funding decisions are made, meetings will be held with students leaders to get their opinions.

Q: In the Twin Cities, the students are paying for the renovation of the student union, but at Crookston the state is being asked to fund the renovation. Why?

A: There are two reasons. First, there are too few students at Crookston to pay for the total cost. Second, Twin Cities students have a tradition of paying for their union renovations. Even for the Twin Cities, the budget gap is being paid by the administration.

Q: What benefits are there for the coordinate campuses because of the reorganization?

A: Multiculturalism is a system-wide issue, so each of the campuses works together on this issue. The campuses also have a system-wide fees process. Each campus, though, does have a separate student affairs office, although there are biannual meetings of these units to share ideas and initiatives.

Q: From the new Campus Life structure, it appears that it will be hard for issues to reach the Vice President. How will this be avoided?

A: Robert Jones noted that students can still talk with him, but that other positions beneath him will know the fine details of programs and processes. These positions will also help with funding issues for the office.

2. STUDENT ALCOHOL ISSUES

Khaled Dajani distributed a Regents report on student alcohol issues. He noted that the report was prepared after several students died last year from alcohol-related complications. The report states that the University is doing a good job, but notes that there are different reporting policies in place on the different campuses.

Shawn Lavelle said that Duluth's policy was changed this summer to allow the administration to contact a student's parents if the student is under 21 years of age. He noted that the new policy is not being advertised, although the administration can contact parents after the first time the student is charged.

Robert Jones said that there are currently three instances, for the Twin Cities, that permit the administration to contact parents. One is if the student is still a financial dependent, second is if the student agrees in writing, and third is if it is a life and death situation.

At the Regents meeting, the question was asked why only Duluth should notify parents. The Board appeared to be split on the decision, so they asked for more research data. There is also no conclusive information that parental notification alters a student's actions.

Several students noted that notification might deter students from seeking help.

Robert Jones continued that there is no easy answer to this issue since parental notification goes against the student development model that a student should be treated as an adult. The Regents will need to make a decision on new policies, although any policy is only aimed at on-campus students. Work will need to be done in the community. One effort is a CD-ROM project on responsible alcohol usage aimed at not making students feel penalized.

A student noted that this new policy might encourage more off-campus drinking, leading to increased drunk driving incidents.

Q: Can the University only notify if a student is underage?

A: Technically, the University could still notify at any age if the student violates the policy.

Q: Have there been any community complaints?

A: The community feels that this is the University's problem and does not like to have the behavior pushed into their neighborhoods when the University's standards become stricter. The University is working closely with city officials on several solutions.

Q: Is the University considering alternate activities for students?

A: The University would be planning events, but with Coffman closed there is no place to hold events. Ultimately it is still up to each student to make a decision to drink or not.

3. COFFMAN UPDATE

Jeremiah Mason, President of the Coffman Board of Governors, said that the Coffman Renovation project was approved last spring. The plans include additions, such as air conditioning, as well as more accommodations for programs, and a 40,000 square foot bookstore.

There have been several unforeseen problems, but the floor plan will be locked in next week, at which time publicizing can be done, likely through some road shows. Coffman is on schedule to open next fall.

He then stated that one major problem has been in regards to the 430 seat theater. When construction began, it was determined that a support column was in the wrong place. Yudof has recommended that the ceiling be raised to fix the problem.

Q: Have the unions considered prohibiting tobacco sales at the unions?

A: The Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drug Committee has written a letter to discontinue tobacco sales. The Board of Governors is considering the proposal but there are several issues, such as a significant revenue loss and taking away a student's freedom of choice.

4. REPORTS

STUDENT SENATE CHAIR

Matthew Wohlman submitted the following written report:

Financial Aid

We need to address the needs of students in keeping financial aid competitive at the University to

ensure that we provide equal opportunity to all students and prospective students who wish to attend this public university. With tuition rising, we need to find a counter balance that will offset the rising costs to students. I will be addressing the concerns of the students at the next SAC meeting which is scheduled to be held on October 8, 2001.

Calculator Policy

Several students have approached me with a concern regarding calculator use. While we understand that this is a tool, there are some concerns that this contributes to an unfair testing environment. We need to address this issue. I would ask that this issue be investigated and addressed by a committee.

Capital Improvement Committee

I need someone to represent the Student Senate on the Capital Improvement Committee. I want to appoint an individual as soon as possible. Please contact me if you are interested.

GAPSA

Trevor Ewanochko reported that Richard Pfitzenreuter gave the 6 year Capitol Plan and GAPSA voted against the USA Today Readership Program.

REP TO REGENTS

Venora Hung, Chair of the Student Representatives to the Regents, said that she would like to promote more communication between SSCC and the Student Representatives to the Regents. Board agendas appear on the web prior to the meeting, and any student concerns can be sent to Khaled or Venora at studentrepresentatives@hotmail.com.

SCFP

Rose Samuel said that the committee received a report on the 6 year Capitol Plan. A presentation was also made on the Coffman bridges. The bridges were unexpectedly closed, and the new plan is an expansive project to capture more area and provide ADA access. It is expected that the new bridges will be in place by the time that Coffman opens.

SCEP

Chris Frazier said that the Teaching Award Selection Committee is looking at expanding its membership, including student input, and identifying one person outside SCEP to serve as the chair. A Civic Learning Subcommittee is also being formed. The issue of student evaluations is being discussed, but it appears that peer evaluations will be dealt with first. No matter which set of evaluations are dealt with, a strong student representation will be needed.

A member said that students in the college of Dentistry are considering developing their own questions since students are having problems with some of the same professors, but access to the University evaluations is an issue.

Chris Frazier concluded that SCEP has approved a requirement for all classes to have a syllabi. The policy though, does not stipulate that anything needs to appear on the syllabi since faculty felt that a lengthier policy would prohibit their freedom.

SCSA

Jason Stingl noted that last year's lighting issue will be turned over to the Subcommittee on Twin Cities Facilities and Support Services and an off-campus resource guide will be handed to MSA. Student interest surveys are being discussed in regards to: a CSOM subcommittee on surveys, web-based results, ways to inform students, and creating a repository for questions and answers.

ABTS

Kari Lindeman said that the ABTS meeting is this weekend. 65-70 representatives from the Bog Ten will be attending the conference.

With no further business, Khaled Dajani thanked everyone for attending and adjourned the meeting.

Becky Hippert
University Senate