

[In these minutes: Discussion with President Yudof, Morris Trip, Spring Social, Creation of Special Committees, Student Senate Docket Approval]

STUDENT SENATE CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE (SSCC) MINUTES

JANUARY 31, 2002

[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, Nick Cecconi, Christina Frazier, Shawn Lavelle, Kari Lindeman, Matt McBlair, Ryan Osero.

REGRETS: Ryan Brux, Trevor Ewanochko, Jason Stingl.

GUESTS: Dan Gilchrist, Patrick Pederson, Joyce Wascoe, President Yudof.

1. REPORTS

CHAIR

No report

STUDENT SENATE CHAIR

Chris Frazier provided the following report by e-mail:

- In January, Shawn Lavelle and I visited the Rochester campus to speak with Provost David Carl. We discussed the Rochester students' interest in being involved at the University. It is important to point out a few facts:
- 85% of the 362 students are graduate students
- 15% of the 362 students are undergraduate
- the 362 students are registered through the TC registrar's office.
- These facts make them a part of the university student body and representation is important. Because of the students registration status, there has been discussion with GAPSA and MSA future representation. A future meeting will be planned between the student organizations.
- University Student Leader's Forum met in January to begin discussions about increasing the communication among campus presidents.
- MHESO Student Advisory Council has been closely following and providing input into discussions about the governor's proposed budget reductions. I presented to the Senate Education Committee the importance of not reducing the MINITEX and MNLink Network funds, which were proposed to be cut over \$400,000 in FY02 and over \$900,000 in FY03, FY04 and FY05. If the Senate and House support such a cut proposal, the impacts would be substantial to the students, faculty, University of Minnesota and the

State. The university is considered by some higher education institutions as the 'mothership,' and the cuts to the U's budget would impact the entire State.

- I attended the University of Minnesota Athletics Forum. In most testimonies, individuals were asking to support athletic programs and not combine the men's and women's departments. It seems that MSA and GAPSA provided the most substantive recommendations to the Board of Regent's subcommittee. The Student Senate did not provide a statement.

CROOKSTON

Matt McBlair reported that CSA held its first meeting last Monday and filled a vacant senator seat. Elections for 2002-03 positions will start in the next few weeks. Students are excited for Lobby Day and are pushing for their project, Bede Hall renovation. CSA is also working on communication, addressing student concerns, and building a good relationship with the community.

DULUTH

No report

MORRIS

No report

MSA

Judy Berning reported that the Facilities and Housing Committee has a new chair, MSA week has been set for February 11-15, and students are being asked to attend Lobby Day. A resolution was also passed to charge bookstore expenses to a student's STARS account.

GAPSA

Patrick Pederson reported that a survey is being conducted of graduate and professional students with results announced to the Regents in April or May. GAPSA is also working to secure subsidies for students who want to attend the University's Conversation Series. Currently tickets are \$25, which prohibits most students from attending. He noted that of the first 100 sold, only three were to students.

SCEP

Chris Frazier provided the following report by e-mail:

- Legislative Accountability Riders: It was suggested that the term graduation productivity replace the current term graduation rates. This would reflect the number of degrees the University awards annually.
- Nick Dehnert and Scott Ferguson provided information to the committee about student perspectives regarding the proposed 13 credit policy. Some areas of focus in the discussion were
 - the policy takes responsibility away from student decision making
 - the students should be responsible to seek advising services
 - work study programs should be more encouraged on campus, which would decrease student traveling time and provide more focus to academics.

- SCEP is in the process of proposing the calendar for 2004 and 2005; however, server issues have come into play. During those academic years, the last day of finals falls on December 23. This leads to another discussion about the question of the number of days a semester should include (70 or 75 days). More discussion will continue.

2. DISCUSSION WITH PRESIDENT YUDOF REGARDING THE FUTURE OF THE UNIVERSITY

President Yudof joined the committee and discussed his recent article on the future of universities. He noted that he is happy with a high subsidy, low tuition model for the University, but there has been a significant drop in state support for higher education across the country in the past decade. What will be needed is an honest discussion of possible alternatives and tough solutions since the problem is not going to disappear on its own.

Historically, Minnesota was home the concept of a land-grant university. But during the 1990's the University experienced less state subsidy, which in term forces increases in tuition. The University has been asked to make cuts, but there is not much left before expectations will not be able to be met. Costs for services that are not self-supporting, such as medical insurance and extension services, have also increased in cost during this period.

The University wants to continue to preserve its land-grant mission of outreach and extension, but this becomes increasingly harder. Students understand tuition increases that support initiatives closer to their educational goals, but it is hard to convince students that their tuition should be used to provide resources state-wide.

Included in the budget crisis is the rise in athletic costs. The University will need to look at all possibilities and explore some ideas more fully to find a solution. The problem is that faculty and students do not want any state funds used for athletics, but there is only so much commercialization that can be done before another solution is needed. Student input into this problem is especially needed so that a creative solution might be reached.

Overall, President Yudof stated that he was upbeat about the future of the University. Graduation statistics and college rankings are increasing, programs are succeeding, and more students are living on campus. He is not as certain about the other 54 major public research institutions across the country. He feels that some will need to change within the next 10 years to be able to continue. As for Minnesota, there are no other institutions similar to the University in the state.

A committee member noted that there is momentum within in the students to provide a solution to funding athletics and the arts and hopes that this input will be welcomed.

President Yudof said that student money should be student directed and he would look forward to any proposals be received. He would, however, recommend keeping any fee separate from the fees committee structure and keeping revenue sports separate. He suggested that students work with Tonya Brown on details of any proposed plan. Coordinate campuses should also be making their own decisions regarding sports and cultural events since a Twin Cities solution might not

work on each campus.

Q: Has community service in the extension system as a graduation requirement been considered as an alternative to decreased funding?

A: It has been considered but it can be considered involuntary servitude without any class credit for the time spent instead of engagement, as the requirement would be meant to be. Any program would also need to make sure that students are not put into a dangerous situation while performing community engagement. Any plan would need to be thoroughly considered, especially in light of the program increases being proposed by President Bush.

A committee member then noted that students feel that there are safety gaps on campus.

President Yudof said that he was centralizing public safety functions, security cameras, card access, and the police, under one unit to diminish safety gaps. An interim head will soon be named to the department, at which time any concerns should be given to them.

Q: Is there a reason behind the increase in graduation rates?

A: Graduation rates have increased over a long period of time, 8% in the 1980's to 33% in the 1990's. This has been accomplished through increased admittance standards, better financial aid, and increased class availability. One item hampering student has been the lack of study space. Walter Library is now open and all students should take advantage of the improvements. Over the next year, more buildings will also open, mainly Coffman Union, which will continue to increase study space on campus.

Q: Is there a proposal to eliminate out-of-state tuition?

A: Tuition is affected by supply and demand. Colleges and campuses that have excess capacity might find it more profitable to offer in-state tuition to all students rather than have extra space in classes. Crookston has already eliminated out-of-state tuition and Morris has a recommendation to do the same. For the Twin Cities, it depends on the college. The trend is that out-of-state tuition will disappear nation-wide so that institutions can be more specialized and attract students from across the country and around the world. Elimination would be especially helpful in graduate and professional programs since the University wants to attract the very best in each field.

Q: What obstacles exist to out-of-state tuition elimination?

A: Obstacles include demand, lost revenue, excess capacity, and providing a fair chance to Minnesota residents at their state institution.

Q: The legislature has proposed tracking foreign students. How far-reaching will a tracking effort be?

A: The state has made several proposals, but this topic is ultimately covered by federal legislation. The University would be willing to track major delinquencies, such as a foreign

student who never shows up for classes in September, but it does not want to become a KGB, tracking every foreign student 24 hours a day throughout their time at the University. If the committee wants for information on any proposed plans, Dean Maziar would be willing to speak to the committee.

With no further questions, the committee thanked President Yudof for his time.

3. COORDINATE CAMPUS TRIPS TO MORRIS

While Ryan Brux was not at the meeting, it was noted the MCSA meetings are Monday nights. Mondays would work for most members. February 11 or the 18 were picked to be forwarded to MCSA for consideration.

4. SPRING SOCIAL FOR SENATORS

Khaled Dajani noted that there was money in the Student Senate budget for each campus to get together separately and talk about Student Senate issues and items of business. He encouraged each of the coordinate campuses to make use of this time to work on Student Senate business. For the Twin Cities campus, it was decided that input would be solicited from the senators to see what they wanted to do as a group activity.

5. CREATION OF SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Chris Frazier said that she and Shawn Lavelle had created charges for four student committees to solicit student input on select topics. Each committee would have a representative campus/student body and final reports, due by March 15, would be forwarded to the administration. The motion was then approved.

6. FEBRUARY 21 STUDENT SENATE AGENDA

Chris Frazier noted two changes to the agenda: her report would only be 10 minutes and Student Regent Lakeesha Ransom would be the guest speaker. Members suggested that senators be asked in advance if they have any questions that they would like Regent Ransom to address. The agenda was then approved as amended.

7. OTHER BUSINESS

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

Becky Hippert
University Senate