

[In these minutes: Discussion of Constitutional Review Committee, Discussion with President Yudof]

STUDENT SENATE CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE (SSCC) MINUTES

November 5, 1998

[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: Ryan Falk (chair), Jason Anderson, Jesse Berglund, YeeLeng Hang, Nathan Hunstad, Deanne Nordberg, Martin O'Hely.

REGRETS: Kelli Rusch, Gita Uppal.

ABSENT: Brandon Lacy.

GUESTS: President Mark Yudof.

The meeting started at 12:41.

1. Approval of the Agenda

The agenda was approved.

2. Approval of the Minutes

The October 1, 1998 minutes were approved.

3. Chair's Report

Ryan Falk said that the lower eligibility requirements will be brought before the University Senate again this afternoon. He then explained that the credit numbers included in the University Senate docket pertain to the quarter system.

4. Student Senate Chair's Report

Jesse Berglund said that there have been some questions as to the interpretation of the term 'student assembly' in the University Senate constitution. The Parliamentarian has ruled that this language pertains to MSA/GAPSA versus the college boards. Therefore, these groups have the power to remove people from the University Senate for not attending MSA/GAPSA meetings.

Jason Anderson noted that the Morris student forum can remove a student senator for not attending an assembly meeting, although the assembly only meets four times per year.

Jesse Berglund then congratulated Jesse 'The Body' Ventura on his recent victory for Minnesota Governor. Jesse Berglund has been asking central administration about the possibility of a forum for student leaders across campus to talk about student issues to the new governor.

He also explained that there are two issues, a tuition resolution and a constitutional amendment regarding the parliamentarian's ruling, that require a Student Senate meeting before the end of Fall Quarter. A motion was then made and seconded to hold a Student Senate meeting on Thursday, December 3, the time to be determined, and a SSCC meeting on Tuesday, November 17 from 1-2. A vote was taken and the motion was approved.

5. Discuss Constitutional Review Committee

Jesse Berglund said that there is a need to reinvigorate this process, since the subcommittee has not met since last year and J.P. Maier, the current chair, is on a different tangent. He then made a motion to disband the current subcommittee, solicit new representatives from the Student Senate, and have an SSCC member chair the subcommittee. The motion was seconded. A vote was taken and approved by a majority.

6. Discussion with President Yudof

President Yudof joined the meeting and answered questions from the following areas:

South Mall Project

The only item to be approved is the construction of a student residence hall with approximately 300-500 beds. In addition, we are also adding 140 beds to Territorial Hall, as well as adding air conditioning and repairing elevators. No design plans have been approved yet for the new residence hall. The Office for Student Development and Athletics (OSDA) has formed a program committee to solicit student opinions as to the design, size of rooms, and balance of singles and doubles. All projects will be small-scale buildings to not interfere with the view from Coffman Union to the river. Also included in plans have been a plaza and an outdoor amphitheater. Parking will also be a key addition. The University has room for 2000-3000 cars underground in the sandstone. The question remains how the University finances this project since the legislature does not fund parking concerns. The University is looking for a solution that could be utilized 24 hours a day. Any ideas or suggestions should be directed to OSDA.

Equalizing Credits

Currently, there is a difference of \$6.00 per credit hour between upper and lower division. This has been put on the back burner to keep tuition increases between 2-3%. Hiring, raises, renovation, and deferred maintenance force higher tuition increases which must be ranked against credit equalization. Eventually, it will be equalized, but it will take more years than originally anticipated. The mandate to equalize tuition was passed a few years ago by the Board of Regents. It might be possible to revisit this issue with the Regents if students are in opposition to equalization.

Governor-elect Jesse Ventura

President Yudof said that he was not happy with the initial plans for financial aid since students

require substantial need-based scholarships. Returning tax money is important, but it does not help the least financially able students. As this point, it is too early to tell how the relationship will be between the Governor and the University. While he has a strong political base, he does not have a well-established party. President Yudof will try and work with him to the best of his ability. Also, not much was mentioned during the campaign regarding higher education, minus the one comment on financial aid. One of the students then suggested a cage match on Northrop Mall.

U-Pass

Como Avenue was designated as a pilot project area. Passes were sold to the residents of this area for \$20 per quarter for unlimited usage. Now, the major hurdle is continuing and increasing the scope of this project without University funds. The original proposal asked the Student Fees Committee to establish a mandatory \$20 fee, which was defeated last year. Several other campuses have similar card passes with student fees funding the project. President Yudof would be in support of this project, but only if it was pay as you go. He does not want any cross-subsidizing since this money would need to come from the academic side. He also admitted that last year the administration did not handle the interaction with student very well. Without student support, it will not be implemented. Therefore, he considered this matter before the students. He suggested calling a meeting between the administration, the MSA Subcommittee on Parking and Transportation, and members of the SSCC.

Graduate Assistant Benefits

Vice Presidents Carol Carrier and Christine Maziar are working on benefits amounts. The question is what it will cost the University and what amount the legislature awards the University for compensation. It is a very high priority for President Yudof since the graduate students have not done as well in recent years as faculty and staff. Another related problem is the rising cost of health care benefits. This year the University succeeded in having dependents included.

Semester Transition

MnSCU and other campuses have reported that when they moved from quarters to semesters they experienced a sharp rise in tuition revenue as students take more classes in the quarter system to try and graduate. During the first year under semesters, there is a sharp decrease in tuition revenue as students take fewer courses. Tuition banding has been discussed as a way to encourage students to take more classes and avoid a drop in tuition revenue. From a student perspective, many students are not aware how much they pay per credit and are not familiar with the banding process. Advertising might be the key to making students aware of this discount. Students also need to get into the mindset of taking 5 courses per credit. President Yudof suggested that perhaps the credit discount should be greater to encourage more students to take advantage of this opportunity.

7. Other Business

YeeLeng Hang distributed a sheet detailing a meeting for student leaders. The rationale for this meeting is for student governance and other student groups to be in conversation with Jane Canney from central administration. It will also allow all bodies to interact and work on a common agenda. The meeting is scheduled for Friday, November 13 and the agenda is to discuss

constituency and accountability, expectations of students for administrators, and expectations of administrators for students. All interested SSCC members should contact YeeLeng as soon as possible.

SSCC asked that Vice Provost Craig Swan and Vice President Peter Zetterberg be invited to a meeting to discuss tuition banding. Also, Vice President Richard Pfitzenreuter should be invited to discuss the biennial request.

Issues to be discussed with SCC include changing the constitution for semesters and working on language regarding members needed to make possible constitutional changes.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:30.

Rebecca Hippert
University Senate