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UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

University Senate Consultative Committee  
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FACULTY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

April 17, 1986  
10:15 - 12:00

AGENDA

Approx. time

- 10:15 1. Minutes of April 3 (enclosed) and March 20 (sent earlier).
2. Report of the Chair.
- 10:25 3. Report from the Nominations Subcommittee.
- 10:35 4. Developing discussion topic for June meeting with the Regents.
- 11:00 5. Other business.
- 11:15 6. Interdisciplinary research. (FCC members are encouraged to invite interested colleagues.)

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MINUTES  
FACULTY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE  
April 17, 1986  
10:20 - 12:10  
300 Morrill Hall

Members present: Ellen Berscheid, Richard Goldstein, David Hamilton,  
Joseph Latterell, Cleon Melsa, Paul Murphy, Irwin Rubenstein, Frank Sorauf,  
Deon Stuthman (Chair).

Guests: Perry Blackshear, Alice Larson, Richard Poppele, Maureen Smith.

1. The minutes of April 3 and March 20 were approved.
2. Developing a discussion topic for the FCC's June 12 luncheon meeting with the Regents.

FCC members proposed the following:

A. The University's interest in improving the scholarly climate for the faculty; background material could include portions of the January, 1984 report of the Task Force on Facilitating the Scholarly Activities of the Faculty. Comments: The Regents probably quite properly regard the scholarly climate as something for the faculty to work out; however, perhaps some specific recommendations from the report might lend themselves well to that discussion.

B. Interdisciplinary research. Comments: The subject is an important one. It might be difficult to abstract adequate background information.

C. Commitment to Focus. At FCC's wrap-up meeting with the Regents for this year, we could profit from hearing their views on public reaction to CtF and its implications. As faculty we are rather insulated from the public. FCC could inquire how the Regents view CtF's progress and prospects and how they regard the University's chances of maintaining momentum and reaching the goal of being one of the top public institutions in the country.

3. Report of the Chair: Adding one more spring quarter meeting of the Twin Cities Campus Assembly.

Professor Stuthman advised the Committee that it appeared nearly impossible to deal fairly at the May 15 Assembly meeting with the report of the Special Committee on Lower Division. The Special Committee will meet on April 22 and 28, and expects to produce its final report on the latter date. The Steering

Committee and the Educational Policy Committee would not have time to attend carefully to the final report on an issue of such importance and still submit a motion by the May 1 docket deadline.

The chair proposed, and the Steering Committee agreed, to add a meeting of the Twin Cities Campus Assembly on June 5.

4. Coordinating Lower Division Education: Forum topic for April 17.

Copies were distributed of a draft resolution to be given out that afternoon to Forum participants. It had been prepared by the Special Committee to serve as a basis for discussion in the forum.

Professor Berscheid observed that the text seemed to have been drawn directly from the Special Committee's draft report and not to have taken into account the suggestions from the Coordinating Committee to make quite drastic changes.

(It was noted that the members of the Consultative Committee had not yet seen the Coordinating Committee's response to the Lower Division Committee. Copies will be sent to FCC.)

At the chair's invitation, Professor Berscheid outlined the Coordinating Committee response: it proposed developing certain curricular tracks, and recommended that particular competencies be ascertained before students move from Lower to Upper Division; it suggested a mechanism involving the campus provosts/chancellors.

FCC members recommended that the Assembly vice chairman, Professor Hamilton, who would chair the forum, identify the "Proposed Resolution" as an abstract of the Lower Division Committee's interim report.

Discussion ensued on how to deal in the forum with the situation that, at the present time, there is a very significant difference in the solutions envisioned between the Special Committee on the one hand and the Coordinating Committee and the Faculty Consultative Committee on the other hand.

Discussion on this item was set aside and resumed later in the meeting.

6. Report from the Nominations Subcommittee.

Professor Berscheid moved that the meeting be closed temporarily to deal with committee nominations. There was an FCC consensus to close the meeting and the chair did so.

Professor Sorauf reported for the nominations subcommittee in lieu of Professor Rubenstein, who was able to join the meeting a few minutes into this item. Copies were distributed of the proposals for committee members and chairs.

Nominating a Senate and Assembly vice chair. Professor Rubenstein arrived and reported that Professor Charles Campbell had agreed to be nominated as Senate and Assembly vice chair for the coming year; the position includes ex officio voting membership on the Faculty and Senate Consultative Committees. Professor Campbell will be on leave fall quarter but will be in town and does not expect to have to miss meetings. Assuming that the student members add their consent, the SCC will nominate Professor Campbell in today's Senate and Assembly meetings.

Intercollegiate Athletics. Professor Sorauf reported on his inquiries among some current members regarding a chair for 1986-87. Two people were recommended by these veterans as being particularly able. The FCC agreed upon whom to ask first.

Professor Murphy moved that the nominations slate, including the proposals for chairs, be approved, with the FCC's appreciation to its nominating committee for its good work. The chair did not call for a vote; there was a consensus of enthusiastic agreement with the motion.

The FCC chair will begin on April 22 to telephone the faculty members FCC proposes to serve on and to chair the following committees: Intercollegiate Athletics, Business and Rules, Planning, and All-University Honors (in the case of the last, he will ascertain people's availability to serve prior to forwarding recommendations to President Keller for his approval and appointment). The chair will also request the recommended people to serve on those non-Senate and non-Assembly bodies to which FCC names the faculty members: Recreational Sports Board of Governors, Student Legal Services Board, and President's Student Behavior Review Panel (again, in the last case FCC makes recommendations for the president's appointment).

If FCC members have reservations or want to propose further nominations, they are to call the chair by April 22.

Span of a "three-year term." Professor Sorauf reported that one faculty member on ACIA expressed a desire to serve through 1986-87 because of having been on sabbatical leave in 1984-85, the second year of the term accepted. It was the understanding of FCC members, as well as their assessment of what is administratively feasible, that a faculty member's normal term is for three consecutive years; that a substitute member is normally found for any faculty committee member on leave, particularly if that leave is of more than one-quarter's duration; and that the term of a regular faculty member in any case concludes three years after the date of appointment.

5. The meeting then returned to the earlier discussion of the work on Coordinating Lower Division Education. (It should be noted that this subject had not been included in the meeting's agenda but had emerged as the FCC considered the chair's recommendation to add a June 5 Assembly meeting and move action on Lower Division recommendations from May 15 to June 5, and also in reaction to the "Proposed Resolution" which had been designed for distribution to today's forum.)

Professor Hamilton had in the course of the meeting been able to telephone Professor William Hanson, chair of the Lower Division Committee, and to convey a question from the FCC. He reported back to the FCC that Professor Hanson had responded that the Special Committee had considered the suggestions made to them (particularly from the Coordinating Committee, but also from the Faculty Consultative Committee and perhaps from other respondents as well) and had rejected some of them. Professor Hanson had added that he would introduce those suggestions in today's forum.

FCC members regarded it as important to get before the forum all the considered proposals which had been made up to this time. Professor Stuthman commented that it is a shortcoming of the whole University discussion that

there is yet no statement defining the problems which are to be solved by coordinating lower division education.

At Professor Sorauf's urging, the Committee returned at this point to its regular agenda.

7. Interdisciplinary research and graduate programs. Guests: Professors Perry Blackshear, Alice Larson, and Richard Poppele.

Professor Stuthman apologized to the guests for the delay in the agenda, and turned the chair over to vice chair Professor Rubenstein, who had outlined questions to structure discussion of this topic. Professor Rubenstein set out six questions:

(1) Does the University need to be able to support the establishment of interdisciplinary programs? Why?

(2) How does the University choose which programs to establish and fund? How does it decide to get rid of a program?

(3) How should such programs be organized and funded? What should their relationships be to graduate programs?

(4) What are the barriers to their establishment?

(5) How is the faculty membership to be chosen? How culled?

(6) Is there a university in the U.S. which does all this well and to which we might look as a model?

He commented that the FCC is interested in how the University can enable the establishment of interdisciplinary research programs. The University must consider how they should be both fostered and overseen. Proposals must have merit, so one does not want the process made too easy, but the steps need to be more clearly defined.

Professor Hamilton said that biology graduate programs which traditionally served very well have narrowed over the years while the field of biology has broadened. No one existing program, he said, contains everything a graduate student should learn to become a research scientist. Neuroscience, cell biology, and molecular biology are active areas which bridge a large number of disciplines. Hence in the case of biology it is essential that we foster interdisciplinary programs.

Professor Berscheid described the situation of clinical psychologists' training at the University. Psychology is a CLA department but Child Development, which provides the training in developmental psychology, is in Education. She noted that the University cannot even make the blend within this single discipline and as a result, the students have to get the developmental background on their own in a separate jurisdiction from their own college.

Professor Sorauf said that the University has the mechanisms for creating interdisciplinary instruction programs, both graduate and undergraduate. One hears repeatedly, however, of the need for better mechanisms for interdisciplinary

research programs. While the social sciences have widened boundaries, scientific disciplines seem to have been slow in altering their boundaries. Hence we need to recognize that the problem is different in different disciplinary areas. He remarked that many of the problems come down in the end to who is going to pay for expensive equipment.

Professor Larson offered an illustration for the last point. The Administrative Council of the School of Veterinary Medicine was asked to give up \$10,000 to help fund the neuroscience program. Since the administrators have no interest in this program per se, it is exceedingly difficult for them to agree to such a contribution.

She cited Veterinary Biology as a good working example of a multi-disciplinary program comprising a department; as a department it has a way to solve its needs. However, neuroscience is not a department and there is no way to solve its needs save by taxing the individual departments which are home to the participating faculty members. It is her view that the University needs special appropriations for such programs.

Professor Blackshear reported that the bioengineering program uses faculty and TA's from all over but as a program has no money although it needs a budget mechanism for its infrastructure. Professor Rubenstein inquired how much money is judged to be needed and how it would be used. Professor Blackshear identified the three main items: the annual seminar, the yearly adjunct professor, and handling the 200 yearly applications. (Bioengineering includes between 30 and 35 faculty members coming from some 20 departments.)

Professor Poppele questioned whether the teaching and research aspects of programs at the graduate level can be clearly separated. One problem situation in practice is this: A program mounts a core interdisciplinary course using an adjunct professor; that person leaves the University; the program tries to replace that teacher but the departments have other priorities. While an interdisciplinary program drawing from three or four departments works fine, that is not the case with a program such as neuroscience which draws from 14 departments in three colleges. (Neuroscience presently has Ph.D. minor status; granting major status is now before the Regents.) An example of the unsolved problems is that biophysics is not attracting the kinds of graduate students it should.

Within a department, he continued, it is clear how the direction of a program is determined. Direction for an interdisciplinary program happens largely by chance. The key question is that of quality control: who will be on the faculty and who will do the culling?

Professor Poppele noted one very positive change. That is that the University has gained competitively in the past year in attracting graduate students by being able to award tuition fellowships and Graduate School fellowships in addition to departmental TA-ships and research grant support.

In response to questions Professor Poppele said the biological sciences include Ph.D.-granting programs without a departmental home: biophysics and biomedical engineering, and he said those programs do exist as departments in some schools. Professor Sorauf suggested that this University, then, as an institution, has been slow to respond. Professor Blackshear replied that the University has responded but has judged differently, concluding that there is value in having an attachment between the graduate students and the undergraduate

education program.

Professor Berscheid urged the FCC to spend further time on this topic at future meetings, to clarify its aim, and to hear from administrators on how they see the University's structure as accommodating such programs.

Professor Hamilton said FCC's aim should be to heighten everyone's awareness. He voiced the view that some programs have outlived their usefulness and should be dropped. Professor Sorauf warned of the danger in propping up an archaic disciplinary structure.

The chair proposed, and the FCC agreed, to use an hour of FCC meeting time on May 1 for further attention to this area. FCC will invite guests from the administration including the dean of the Graduate School. The chair asked for suggestions of additional individuals to invite.

The meeting adjourned at 12:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Meredith Poppele,  
Executive Assistant