

Minutes*

Senate Committee on Educational Policy
Wednesday, March 23, 2011
2:00 – 4:00
238A Morrill Hall

Present: Thomas Brothen (chair), Norman Chervany, Sean Finn, Joseph Kirchner, Alon McCormick, Robert McMaster, Cody Mikl, Kristen Nelson, Peh Ng, Jane Phillips, Peggy Root, Paul Siliciano, Donna Spannaus-Martin, Elaine Tarone, Cathrine Wambach

Absent: Barbara Brandt, Henning Schroeder, Alfonso Sintjago, Michael Wade

Guests: Tom Dohm (Office of Measure Services), Ole Gram (Office of the Vice Provost for Faculty and Academic Affairs), David Langley (Center for Teaching and Learning); Professor Nita Krevans (ad hoc committee on graduate education policies); Professor Susan Wick (chair, Classroom Advisory Subcommittee)

[In these minutes: (1) early-term assessment of teaching and learning; (2) P&A eligibility for teaching awards; (3) leave-of-absence policy for graduate students; (4) proposed policy: Adding, Changing, or Discontinuing Academic Plans, Curriculum, and Requirements; (5) proposed policies: Credit Requirements for Master's and Doctoral Degrees; Application of Graduate Credits to Degree Requirements; (6) proposed policy: Appointments as Directors of Graduate Studies; (7) statement on classroom funding; (8) resolution on academic civility]

1. Early-Term Assessment of Teaching and Learning

Professor Brothen convened the meeting at 2:00 and welcomed Drs. Gram and Langley to discuss a set of options for early-term assessment of teaching and learning.

Dr. Gram explained that last summer Vice Provost Carney asked him and Drs. Dohm and Langley to come up with a new early-semester evaluation form that articulated more closely with the new student ratings of teaching. The principles Dr. Carney enunciated were that any form must be easy for instructors to adopt, it must parallel the student-rating-of-teaching questions, must provide useful feedback to the instructor early in the semester, and must provide a good return on the investment (i.e., it must reach large numbers of instructors). They are recommending a set of options, as follows (between the * * *):

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Background:

1. An early- or mid-term assessment of teaching/learning (between Week 3 and Week 8) is one of the most recommended formative approaches to improve the educational environment for students.

* These minutes reflect discussion and debate at a meeting of a committee of the University of Minnesota Senate; none of the comments, conclusions, or actions reported in these minutes represents the views of, nor are they binding on, the Senate, the Administration, or the Board of Regents.

Conducting an early semester assessment is voluntary and has no immediate implications for tenure, promotion, reappointment, or merit raise.

2. Many universities that advocate for early term assessments of teaching offer a single, generalized option meant to be applied across all spectrums of teaching. Yet there are many core processes involved in teaching and learning that can be subject to early term assessment, among them: a) basic issues surrounding student learning, b) the clarity, organization, and workload associated with the course, and c) the value of class assignments/readings for a given course.

Recommendations

1. We recommend an approach that has five options for university instructors. The purpose of each option is described below:

Form 1: Likert Scaled Items on Broad Teacher Functions

Purpose: Provide a broad perspective on teaching with results directly connected to an existing help manual and the current SRT core items

Form 2: Student Learning

Purpose: Gain direct information about conditions that affect student learning from a learner-centered perspective

Form 3: Instructor Performance

Purpose: Gain direct information on the organization, clarity of instruction, and workload of the course

Form 4: Value of Assignments, Class Activities, or Readings

Purpose: Gain an understanding of the worth of an important task or activity that students have recently completed

Form 5: Professional Consultation from the Center for Teaching and Learning

Purpose: Receive insights into student learning and course delivery through a one-to-one confidential consultation

2. Time should be set aside at the end of class to allow students to be fully engaged in the feedback process. In addition, a summary of the findings should be presented to students in a subsequent class for processing and discussion.

Early Term Assessment Option 1: Likert Scaled Items

Items 1-6 are intended to parallel the 6 core items of the SRT and therefore provide preliminary information on these teacher functions prior to the end-of-semester summative rating.

1. Course Preparation/Organization: The course is well organized.
2. Instructional Clarity: The instructor clearly communicates the subject matter of this course.
3. Instructional Feedback: The feedback I receive on my assignments helps me learn the course content.

4. Teacher/Student Interactions: I feel comfortable approaching the instructor with questions about the course.
5. Student Learning: I am developing deeper knowledge of the course content.
6. Interest/Enthusiasm: The instructor inspires me to learn more about course topics.
7. My responsibilities for meeting course requirements are clearly defined.
8. Course readings are an important tool to help me master the subject matter
9. The instructor uses technology effectively to help me learn in this course
10. The course is proceeding at an appropriate pace.

Written Items

1. What has the instructor done that has most helped your learning?
2. To help me improve in this course, my instructor could:

Early Term Assessment Form 2: Student Learning

Students: Please complete the following:

- A. I learn best when:
- B. I am most engaged in class when:
- C. To help me improve, the instructor could:

Early Term Assessment Form 3: Instructor Performance

Students: Please comment on how each of the following influences your learning:

1. the degree to which the course is well organized
2. how clearly the instructor has conveyed information through
 - a. written formats (e.g., assignments, tests, emails, slides)
 - b. verbal formats (e.g., class presentations, answering questions)

What other suggestions do you have for the instructor that would help your learning in this course?

Early Term Assessment Form 4: Value of Assignments/Class Activities/Readings

Assignment/Task/Reading:

(instructor describes a recent class assignment, activity, or reading that students completed)

Students: Comment on the value of this activity for helping you learn the content of this course.

Early Term Assessment Option 5: Professional Consultation from the Center for Teaching and Learning

The Center for Teaching and Learning has developed a process called Student Feedback through Consensus (SFC) that uses guided discussion and consensus to generate clear, prioritized, and confidential student feedback on classroom instruction. Students work in small groups to agree upon answers to the questions:

"What are the strengths of this course that help you learn?"

"What changes would improve your learning?"

"How should these changes be implemented?"

The four step protocol is below:

1. Pre-class conference with the instructor to find out if there are any particular aspects of the class you would like feedback on.
2. Class observation by the CTL consultant and SFC process (instructor leaves the room for the final 15-20 minutes for the feedback session)
3. Confidential consultation with CTL staff member using a written summary of student feedback
4. Address feedback results with students in a subsequent class

Dr. Langley explained that all of these options are formative and voluntary. They looked at what is being done at other CIC institutions and learned that they offer a wide range of options; most offer only one, some offer as many as eight. This plan offers five.

In #1, the first six questions are close to but not identical to the core student-rating-of-teaching questions. They have added items 7-10 and two written items. Dr. Langley reviewed the five options. He noted that #5 has been available for a number of years.

Early-term assessment works well if it is carried out fully and the instructor tries to implement changes, Dr. Langley commented, and the evidence indicates that there are effects on the final class ratings—a clear, positive increase.

Dr. Dohm said that with the first option, the Office of Measurement Services would create a form with bubble sheets, administer the responses, and could report statistics. The other four options could be a link to a website where instructors could download forms and implement the early-term assessment immediately. Some wanted the Likert scale because they wished to use the assessments with TAs, and this would provide a uniform way to gather information.

Is there a concern about feedback before grades are awarded, as there is with the final ratings, Professor McCormick asked? This is given to faculty during the term, Dr. Dohm said, and is formative, not to be used in the salary and promotion process. The hope is that instructors would use the results during the term to improve instruction, so one would want faculty to know the results. Would there be a time after which an instructor could not use them, Professor McCormick inquired? Dr. Gram said the expectation is that it would be used between the third and eighth week; it would not make sense to use it late in the term.

Professor Chervany asked why they do not propose to use the exact same questions as the student-rating form. Dr. Langley agreed that there is an argument for doing so. These are very close. Dr. Dohm said it was their understanding, from this Committee, that since student identity is to be protected for the student ratings, it might not be if the same language were used on the early-assessment forms. Professor Chervany responded that if the student ratings are seen as an important measure, the early-assessment form as a tool for improvement should use the same questions.

Professor Chervany also commented that for schools that have seven-week courses, any delay in providing the responses to the Likert-scale questions in option 1 would be a problem. The feedback would have to be almost instantaneous if it is to be any use. Dr. Langley agreed and observed that for options 2-5, the feedback is immediate.

Ms. Phillips said that she uses early assessment during weeks three and four, but students have few grades at that point.

Dr. Langley reiterated the point that all five options are available; the instructor chooses—or may not choose to use any of them. Or an instructor may have his or her own means of early assessment.

Professor McCormick said that the student-rating form is difficult to use in team-taught courses, but this will be very useful.

Professor Brothen thanked Drs. Dohm, Gram, and Langley for their report

2. P&A Eligibility for Teaching Awards

Professor Brothen next turned to the question of faculty-like P&A eligibility for the Morse-Alumni and Graduate-Professional Teaching awards. He began by raising a question about whether in some cases individuals who may have a stellar record are nonetheless nominated too early because they have not had sufficient time to accumulate a record comparable to others who have been devoting their efforts to instruction for many years. It was noted that there is a requirement that someone be at the University for at least five years before being eligible for either of the awards.

Professor Tarone, who served on the Graduate-Professional nominating committee, said it seems to be more of an end-of-career award rather than one that might awarded to a pre-tenure faculty member. There is nothing in the criteria, however, to suggest that someone must be at the University for 20 years rather than 5 years in order to win. The implication is that someone has made significant contributions, Professor Brothen said; should the requirement for time at the University be increased? Professor Tarone said that five years is sufficient; pre-tenure faculty members can make great contributions that are worth rewarding.

Professor Siliciano reported that there had been similar discussion among the members of the Morse-Alumni nominating committee. There was some lack of understanding of the P&A role and a concern that adding them to the pool of eligible candidates would favor the Twin Cities campus (because there are fewer P&A staff engaged in instruction on the other campuses). Overall, however, they wanted to recognize P&A staff and concluded that the Morse-Alumni award was the best vehicle to do so. He said he was concerned that adding to the eligibility pool would make a difficult task impossible, but he came away from the nominating committee work believing that the task was already impossible, so adding more people to the pool of eligible candidates would not make the situation worse. There is no way to compare activities of the candidates, he said. He said it is very important to recognize faculty-like P&A staff, and while his first inclination was to support creating a separate but identical award, after understanding that a separate award has been discussed for several years but with no result, he has concluded a change has to happen and the eligibility for the Morse-Alumni award should be broadened. The Committee should approve this change, he urged.

This change will put pressure on college committees to make choices, Professor Wambach observed, because there are limits on the number of candidates a college may forward.

The college committee is the point where length of service should be considered, Professor Siliciano maintained. Someone may be a great candidate, but the accomplishments of 5 years do not compare with the accomplishments of 20 years. The college committee needs to say "you are a

tremendous candidate" and put the person up for the award when it believes he or she stands a good chance to win. That is always a judgment call, Professor Tarone said, and it is never easy, but there are candidates with shorter periods of service who should be nominated and receive the award. Some colleges do have awards for young faculty, Professor McCormick pointed out.

Professor Brothen said he had been awaiting comments from Vice Provost Carney because of a concern that the expanded eligibility could mean an increase in the number of awards or in the funding required. Dr. Carney may wish to propose a separate award. Professor Wambach noted that the number of awards is limited by the policy, so there could not be an increase in the number of awards or, therefore, the financial commitment required. Vice Provost Carney's concern is that not all of the awards are given every year, and they may be with an expanded pool. Professor Siliciano agreed that in some years the full number of Morse-Alumni awards are not given; Professor Tarone observed, however, that all of the Graduate-Professional awards are given (in one year, one was not). She said that they believed it would be insulting not to give an award, given what people had accomplished. Professor Siliciano said that sometimes the Morse-Alumni committee wants to give 12 awards (it is limited to 8) and sometimes does not want to give as many as allowed, depending on the pool of nominees.

Professor Chervany said he was strongly opposed to a separate award. It would clearly not have the same prestige. As a matter of principle, if the award is designed to put the University behind recognizing good teaching, everyone should be in the pool of eligible candidates. Whether there should be more awards given or more funding provided are separate issues. Everyone should compete for the same award. He said he was ready to vote for the change and saw no reason to delay.

Professor McCormick said that most science and engineering professional society awards are organized by age group, although he had no objection to the proposal to have only one award. Ms. Phillips said that the biological sciences do not organize awards by age group; Professor Tarone said that the awards in CLA fields are not organized that way, either. Professor Chervany said that group by age is an additional dimension the Committee could also consider at another time. The proposal before the Committee, whatever the number and domain, makes everyone eligible. He said he would be comfortable with awards for early and later accomplishments, but that matter need not be dealt with today. There is only one issue before the Committee—eligibility—and the other matters can be taken up at another time.

Professor McCormick asked if there was need for any further definition of the phrase "faculty-like." Ms. Phillips said there was not because the colleges will not nominate people who are not qualified; the process is self-limiting. Professor Siliciano said that colleges have interpreted the criteria differently and may nominate someone, for example, who has organized a tremendous advising system. The dossiers are very different in the way they meet the five criteria for the award, but every Morse-Alumni committee he has been on has emphasized teaching. Ms. Phillips suggested that an FAQ could be added indicating that the candidates must have done some teaching.

The Committee voted unanimously in favor of the change in the eligibility for the two awards. The recommendation will be brought to the Faculty Consultative Committee and the Faculty Senate for adoption.

3. Leave-of-Absence Policy for Graduate Students

Professor Brothen now welcomed Professor Krevans to the meeting to discuss four policies related (more and less) to graduate education.

The first one, "Leave of Absence and Readmission," Professor Krevans reported, was developed in response to an explicit request from the Council of Graduate Students (COGS). The ad hoc committee she chairs received a resolution from COGS and has proposed amendments to the existing policy on leaves of absence that governs undergraduates.

In response to a query from Vice Provost McMaster, Professor Krevans said they are not proposing any changes to the provisions governing undergraduate students. Dr. McMaster, however, said that one new provision (adding the words "by their college" to the following language: At the time of matriculation, students should be informed by their college about both the consequences of Inactive status and the University's policy, including whether re-admission after a period of Inactive status is dependent on availability of space in the program"). After brief discussion, Professor Krevans agreed the phrase could be removed; Professor Wambach suggested the point about responsibility for notification be in an FAQ.

Professor Krevans then observed that proposed new language would affect undergraduates as well: "Students granted a leave of absence may not use university facilities or services available only to registered students." Vice Provost McMaster said he concurred with this addition; Dr. Falkner said that is the expectation, in any event. Professor Krevans said her ad hoc committee was told there are questions about insurance and liability.

Ms. Phillips said it would be great if new language for graduate students also affected undergraduates: "For graduate students, the period of an approved leave of absence will not be counted toward time to degree." Vice Provost McMaster said it would not be possible to apply this provision to undergraduates because of federal rules.

Vice Provost McMaster asked that his office be given time to make sure that none of the changes being proposed would have an unforeseen effect on undergraduate education.

The policy also has a draft form to be used in applying for a leave-of-absence; the Committee reviewed it and offered a few suggestions to change it.

4. Proposed Policy: Adding, Changing, or Discontinuing Academic Plans, Curriculum, and Requirements

Professor Krevans explained that this proposed policy is a combination of two existing policies, "Academic Unit Authority over the Curriculum and Major" and "Review of Proposals for New and Changed Academic Programs." There were dramatic changes in for graduate education with the loss of the Graduate School governance structure, Professor Krevans said. The policy does not represent any change and really has little of substance; the important matters are contained in the associated procedures. The revision to the procedures will provide that changes to Master's programs will be approved via a different route than Ph.D.s. Some on the ad hoc committee believed this to be an administrative matter while others believed that the policy is an educational matter that should come to this Committee.

The Committee concluded that it wished to see the procedures as well. It was agreed that Mr. Ziegenhagen from the Provost's office should be invited to discuss the policy and procedures with the Committee.

Professor Wambach noted language in the existing policy on Academic Unit Authority about authority to revise courses that does not appear in the revised policy. That should be revisited. She also said that who should be involved in decisions about courses is a complex matter. Departments should not be allowed to eliminate all their introductory courses, which many other units may rely on—and units can drop courses without even telling other units. There is nothing to stop a department from doing so, Dr. McMaster said, because there is no Twin Cities curriculum committee.

Vice Provost McMaster commented that merging the two existing policies appears to be mixing two different things together. Dr. Falkner said that the "Review of Proposals for New and Changed Academic Programs" is a policy established by the Provost's office while the "Academic Unit Authority over the Curriculum and Major" were adopted during the review of all educational policies a couple of years ago. She agreed that they are perhaps not dealing with the same issues. The Committee concurred. It was agreed that Vice Provost McMaster would review the proposed changes to the procedures for reviewing academic program changes to be sure that undergraduate programs are not affected.

5. Proposed Policies: (1) Credit Requirements for Master's and Doctoral Degrees and (2) Application of Graduate Credits to Degree Requirements

Professor Krevans noted that the Committee had seen both of these policy proposals earlier and reported that the ad hoc committee had approved changes suggested by the Committee.

The Committee approved the two policies unanimously. They will be brought to the Faculty Consultative Committee in April and to the Faculty Senate in May.

6. Proposed Policy: Appointments as Directors of Graduate Studies

Professor Krevans said that there was disagreement on the ad hoc committee and among the stakeholders about whether this should be a policy; the Faculty Consultative Committee, however, has asked that this Committee bring forward a policy recommendation for consideration by the Faculty Senate. The proposed policy read as follows:

1. Every graduate program must have a director of graduate studies.
2. A tenured or tenure-track faculty member with an earned doctorate or designated equivalent in an appropriate field from an accredited institution is eligible to serve as director of graduate studies.
 - Collegiate deans or their designated representatives at the collegiate level may, with the approval of the Provost or the Provost's designated representative, assign the role of director of graduate studies to an individual that does not fully conform to this requirement.

[Reason for exception to policy: allow flexibility for director of graduate studies appointments in line with collegiate needs]

3. Collegiate deans or their designated representatives at the collegiate level must review all individual appointments to the role of director of graduate studies.
4. Each college must have a set of publicly available standards and processes for appointments to the role of director of graduate studies, to include:
 - their responsibilities and reporting lines; and
 - the appointment review process.
5. Collegiate units may develop more specific local criteria, so long as they are not in conflict with the above policy statements.

RESPONSIBILITIES: Collegiate units are strongly encouraged to provide orientation for new Directors of Graduate Studies

Directors of Graduate Studies (DGSs) were chartered by the Graduate School constitution, which has been eliminated. The ad hoc committee proposed this policy and encountered opposition, Professor Krevans said, so for the time being there will be a provostal memo to provide statutory authority for the appointment of DGSs. The issue re-emerged before the memo was drafted—there appeared to be a change in sentiment about whether DGS appointments should be a matter of policy.

Vice Provost McMaster said he endorsed provision #2, which allows flexibility. That is a big issue, Professor Krevans said. There are a number of professional Master's programs that would destroy a faculty member's career if he or she had to be a true DGS, so those programs have professional staff carrying out most of the duties. Everyone on the ad hoc committee believed that a program could have a regular faculty member as DGS and allow that person to delegate much of the responsibility to a staff member. The ad hoc committee believed, however, that every program should have a faculty member as DGS.

Why were people opposed, Professor McCormick asked? Not all programs have a DGS, Professor Krevans said—all programs that were under the Graduate School had a DGS, but this policy would cover ALL graduate programs. Second, many felt it would be a burden to have a faculty member be the DGS and that students would be better served by having someone who serves in the role on a continuous basis rather than a faculty member who turns over every three years. A lot of students move through these programs quickly and some do not believe a DGS is needed.

Professor Nelson asked who governs the faculty in the program and guides the curriculum if there is no DGS. The draft policy says the dean appoints the DGS. Professor Krevans said that historically, and technically, the Dean of the Graduate School made the appointments; in practice, programs had a process for electing the DGS and the dean normally approved the elected candidate. But there was a mechanism for the dean to say "no" if there were reasons not to approve the appointment. The graduate faculty voted to elect the DGS; now there is no graduate faculty, so they thought it made sense to put the formal appointment authority in the college dean, taking the role the Dean of the Graduate School played in the past.

There is no comparable policy for a Director of Undergraduate Studies, Professor Krevans observed; in some departments, those matters are handled by long-term P&A staff, but there is no policy requiring such a position. Professor Wambach recalled that the Committee had discussed this in the past; the department chair has often played the role of DUGS. Because of Graduate School rules, the DGS function existed. Professor Krevans also noted that even when the Graduate School existed, not all graduate faculty were regular faculty, but even then appointment of non-regular faculty as DGSs required an exception under the Graduate School constitution.

May someone serve in the DGS role but not carry the title? They may not, Professor Krevans said. Professor Siliciano asked how, in programs with a non-faculty member as DGS, the coordination of academic issues with the faculty occurs. Professor Chervany said that the Carlson School has large programs; they have an associate dean (regular faculty member) and assistant dean (P&A staff member) who run the details. A faculty group advises on curriculum changes and any proposals go to the full faculty for a vote. He said he did not believe that there is any DGS for MBA programs anywhere in the University; those programs extracted themselves from the Graduate School because they wanted more autonomy. So the dean could be the DGS, Professor Siliciano suggested. Or the associate dean, Professor Chervany said. Would they have a non-faculty member serve as associate dean, Professor Wambach asked? As assistant dean but not associate dean, Professor Chervany said. He said he did not believe that this policy would cause a problem for the Carlson School—what the policy is trying to accomplish is create accountability and identification of a person to go to about the programs.

There is a question about the scope of the policy, Professor Krevans said. Their tentative conclusion was that these policies apply to all post-baccalaureate degrees EXCEPT first professional degrees, which are defined as Veterinary Medicine, Medicine, Dentistry, Pharmacy, and Law.

The Committee voted unanimously in favor of the policy.

7. Statement on Classroom Funding

Professor Brothen now welcomed Professor Wick to the meeting to present a statement from the Classroom Advisory Subcommittee (CAS) concerning funding for classrooms. The statement read as follows (between the * * *):

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STATEMENT ON FUNDING FOR CLASSROOM FACILITIES AND TECHNOLOGIES

Classroom facilities and technologies require periodic maintenance and replacement, and identification of and planning for lifecycle costs is a fiscally prudent approach to management of classroom facilities and technology infrastructure.

We note with great concern that classroom upgrade work continues to be funded primarily with one-time funds (e.g., capital projects like STSS). The recurring lifecycle costs for these classrooms have not been funded. We are, however, accruing these costs. Given the importance of general-purpose classrooms, we cannot continue to defer these costs without jeopardizing our teaching and learning mission.

Central classroom operational recurring funding levels had risen to 79% of requirements (FY08) then fell to 37% of lifecycle need with recurring cuts in FY10 & 12. At such low levels, faculty and students will be required to endure facilities and technologies that are substantially beyond their planned lifespan, and whose failure will result in degradation of the learning experience. The University of Minnesota invested in these spaces, but without maintenance and renewal, at some point the technology, fixtures and furnishings will be inaccessible due to failure.

Consider an instructor who comes to class prepared to utilize PowerPoint, a DVD, and material from the internet but who finds that one or more parts of the necessary technology are not functioning correctly and cannot be immediately fixed. Even though the frustrated instructor scrambles to make this class period as effective as possible, the educational experience may be diminished. While this scenario may occasionally occur even with the best facilities and support staff readily available, we are concerned that chronic underfunding of OCM will cause this to occur more often and seriously hamper effective course delivery. Students also deserve classroom space that contains furnishings that are not broken and are in reasonably good condition.

Given the budget reductions and future uncertainty, OCM has placed the following projects on hold:

20 Tech. Lifecycle Renewals \$350,000
(Deferred technology updates to 20 Projection Capable Classrooms)

Blegen Hall - 3rd floor, WB \$400,000
(Remove fixed seating; ADA, Fire/Safety, carpet & finish upgrades)

Borlaug 335 & 365, St. Paul \$475,000
(Replace 230 seats (no longer supported); carpet & finish upgrades)

Ruttan Hall B25/35/45, St. Paul \$700,000
(Replace 445 seats (no longer supported); carpet & finish upgrades)

Keller 3111/3115/3125/3230, EB \$925,000
(Replace 315 seats (no longer supported); carpet & finish upgrades)

The Classroom Advisory Subcommittee (CAS) recommends a minimum level of recurring funding at 50% of lifecycle requirement to maintain the basic-level of maintenance and renewal of classroom infrastructure. CAS furthermore recommends restoring funding to 80% of need by the 2014-15 biennium, in order to provide a quality standard for classroom facilities, technology and support that is appropriate for a major, nationally ranked university.

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Professor Wick noted that CAS reports to both this Committee and the Committee on Finance and Planning; CAS works with the Office of Classroom Management (OCM) and its director, Jeremy Todd, is a member of CAS. OCM has worked out the lifecycles and costs for each classroom, and Mr. Todd brought to CAS's attention the faculty over the last five year, the recurring funding for classroom

maintenance for general-purpose classrooms has eroded. In FY08 OCM received about 79% of the calculated lifecycle costs for classrooms; for FY10-12, that number is down to about 37%.

This is a statement from CAS that it sees this reduction in funding as a problem. Professor Wick related that she has been teaching at the University for about 25 years, and in her first few years of teaching the classrooms were depressing, which affects student perceptions. She presented the statement to the Committee on Finance and Planning; it wanted more information and suggested that she meet with Vice Provost McMaster. She did so, and distributed copies of a summary of the discussion that Dr. McMaster has reviewed and approved.

* * *

Professor Sue Wick and Mr. Jeremy Todd met with Vice Provost Robert McMaster on 15 March to discuss general purpose classroom funding:

While many improvements have been made in the University's general purpose classrooms, a vital initiative that needs support is recurring classroom funding for renewal and replacement. Capital funded academic building renovation and construction projects (such as Architecture, Nicholson, and STSS) directly improve central classroom facilities and infrastructure, including fixtures, furnishings & equipment (FF&E); however, the recurring support to maintain these teaching & learning spaces has been cut going forward. The recurring support for maintenance and renewal is part of the budget of the Office of Classroom Management (OCM), which is funded through the General Purpose Classroom Cost Pool.

Recurring funding continues to be the key factor that determines the pace of facilities improvements, directly impacting the University's ability to respond to the needs of faculty and the expectations of students.

Highlighting the funding complication:

Classroom Management received a 32% reduction (\$1.4 million) in the recurring operating budget starting July 1, 2009. The operating budget allows for lifecycle technology upgrades, as well as minor facilities improvements. It does not support the modernization of HVAC systems or Fire/Life-safety projects that would be supported in a capital project. An additional 14% reduction (\$400,000) will take effect July 1, 2011.

VP McMaster acknowledged that OCM will continue to focus on capital funded renovation and construction projects to improve the classroom physical plant, FF&E and technology infrastructure, as well as requesting one-time funds for specific renewal projects. He supports the Classroom Advisory Committee statement to reinstate recurring funding and encouraged CAS to enlist the support of SCFP and SCEP.

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Professor Chervany asked if Finance and Planning was concerned about the principle or the numbers. He said he would be shocked if it had been concerned with the principle; the only thing to debate is the numbers. This is a clarion call, "we need help," and does not force anyone to do

something. Finance and Planning was worried about a special case of begging, Professor Wick said, and what about the cost pool (because OCM is part of a cost pool that is approved through the budget process).

If the question is what the University will pay for during a contraction, Professor Wambach said, what if it decides to pay for people and reduce the infrastructure? That is a tough question, and the colleges are resisting increases in the cost pools. The question is where the tipping point is between maintaining facilities and paying people to teach in them. She said she was not sure where she would come out on the question.

Vice Provost McMaster reported that his office's budget has been reduced substantially in the last two years; should he lay off people or decrease support for classrooms? He made the decision; there were deep cuts in classroom budgets. He said the CAS statement was a good one to bring forward; he said he was not sure that it would lead to additional funding for classrooms, but if someone does not see a new projector in a classroom, the statement helps explain why.

Professor McCormick said he was very familiar with a number of classrooms, and if he saw "spiffing up," he would have raised his eyebrows. The classrooms he teaches in are not new but they are serviceable. He agreed, however, that there is a legitimate question about lifecycles.

Ms. Phillips said that in looking at the history of funding, there's a need to get away from the boom-and-bust approach. The campus had terrible classrooms, then got them up to grade, and now apparently will let them go again. Calling for a 50% level of funding for lifecycle costs is not unreasonable. And they should not be allowed to degrade so far that they need to be completely renovated, Professor Siliciano added.

This is a problem that all state facilities face, Professor Nelson said. She said she believed maintenance is good business and keeps facilities safe. The 37% level of funding appears to be uniquely gouging classrooms.

At its base, this statement says to the University that over time there needs to be a reasonable balance between new facilities, maintenance of existing facilities, and support for people, Professor Chervany said. If the University lets any of them get out of whack, it is reducing the quality of the student experience. This statement says the University is letting maintenance get out of whack and that ongoing maintenance is an important issue. There is a balance, X, that should be found. Professor Root said the Committee can say what X is: It is the very minimum needed for what is a usable classroom. The Committee should make clear what the minimum requirements are so that student learning is not impaired—and it does not mean super-high technology. It means carpeting without holes that people trip over, Professor Wick commented.

Professor Nelson said that her motivation in supporting the statement is based on where new curricula are going. The University has classrooms that are not designed for where curricula are going. Classrooms must evolve, and the Committee should not just make a humble request because classrooms evolve with pedagogy.

Vice Provost McMaster said there is the maintenance of existing classrooms as well as funding for new maintaining classrooms in new buildings that have come on line with no new funding,

such as the Science Teaching and Student Services building and Hansen Hall. Part of the problem is maintaining what the University has and part is finding funding for maintaining new facilities.

Professor Chervany said he liked the principle articulated in the statement and said that any definition of minimum requirements that does not include wireless would be inadequate. The Committee needs to draw the line and make it clear that the University must keep in balance maintenance, new facilities, and people. It is ridiculous to have new facilities and not have the funds to maintain them.

The Committee approved the CAS statement unanimously.

8. Resolution on Academic Civility

The Committee reviewed the most recent draft of the resolution on academic civility from the Committee on Equity, Access, and Diversity, determined that few of the amendments it had proposed had been adopted, and declined to endorse it.

Professor Brothen adjourned the meeting at 4:30.

-- Gary Engstrand

University of Minnesota