

Minutes\*

**Faculty Consultative Committee  
November 3, 1988**

- Present: Mark Brenner (chair), Warren Ibele, Lynnette Mullins, J. Bruce Overmier, Ronald Phillips, M. Kathleen Price, Burton Shapiro, W. Phillips Shively, Michael Steffes, James VanAlstine
- Guests: Gayle Grika (Footnote), Irwin Rubenstein (Faculty Legislative Liaison), Maureen Smith (Brief)

**1. Role of FCC in the Presidential Search**

Professor Brenner reported on discussions he had had with Regent Lebedoff about the participation of the Committee in interviews of candidates for the presidency. Committee members seemed to agree that while the role of the search advisory committee is an important one, that group is appointed and will disband after the search whereas FCC is elected and is the body with which the new president must work on a continuing basis; it would seem to be desirable for the candidates to know FCC and vice versa.

The understanding between Professor Brenner and Regent Lebedoff is that FCC will meet with the final candidates.

Committee members also discussed the role being played by the outside consulting firm and the availability of information to members of the search advisory committee. There was some concern expressed about the extent to which the advisory committee is able to play the full role envisioned.

**2. Questions for presidential candidates**

Committee members deliberated about the questions it would wish to address to the candidates. The questions formulated in the discussion were these:

1. How do you perceive and interact with the governance system?
2. What do you see as the academic mission of the University in the context of higher education in the State of Minnesota?
3. What is the appropriate mix of service, teaching, and research for the University?
4. Once you have identified the mission, how do you get it accomplished? (For example, what was your primary goal in your last office and how did you accomplish it?)
5. How do you promote excellence in the University in a State that has a strong populist tradition?
6. How do you achieve or implement your goals? What are your expectations of faculty and students in the implementation of those goals?
7. What are your views about "Academic Priorities"?

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8. What do you see as the role of the faculty in setting the academic priorities/"Academic Priorities" of the University?
9. What are your views on
  - a vice president for research?
  - the role of the dean of the graduate school?
  - the appropriate level of State support for research?
  - the appropriate number of administrators and levels of administration?
10. What is your reaction to the administrative structure of the University, with separate system and campus administrators but where, for the Twin Cities campus, the system and campus administrators are the same individuals?
11. What is the proper role of graduate education and research, of undergraduate teaching, and the proper balance between them?
12. What is your view on future delivery systems in higher education (e.g., telecommunications, computers) in the year 2000?
13. Can you describe or envision your relationships with the regents and the legislature?
14. How would you move a policy between the regents and the legislature and what interplay would there be with the faculty?
15. What do you see as the role of intercollegiate athletics at the University?

Professor Brenner pointed out that it would not be possible to predict when any meetings with candidates might be scheduled; it would likely be on very short notice.

### **3. Position Description, Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs**

Committee members were provided copies of the position description for the individual who will be selected to replace Betty Robinett. Professor Brenner said that he thought it was well drawn. It appears the description as written is final, but Professor Brenner observed that the faculty have already staked a claim that this position will be critical to them and that if there are objections, they can be made known in the interview process.

### **4. Percent of Instructional Costs Covered by Tuition**

Professor Brenner reported that he had been told by President Sauer that the reaction of the Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) had reacted negatively to the University's proposal to lower the percentage of instructional cost expected to be covered by tuition. Minnesota is now in the middle of the pack, but there is a clear trend that as tuition has increased, students take fewer credits. If the formula is to be changed, the University will have to fight hard to achieve it.

It was pointed out that HECB always favored high tuition accompanied by high amounts of financial aid; they see this as a redistributive social program. It is a defensible view but it is not the only one. It was also noted that the impact of a successful biennial request would substantially increase the amount students would pay, thereby bringing it close to the top of the rankings; to leave the formula as it is means that students will be pitted against excellence for the University in the development of future biennial requests. One question that might be asked is "if the University wishes to be in the top 5, must it also have the top 5 tuition request?"

## **5. Letter to the President**

Professor Brenner informed the Committee that following its last meeting he had sent a letter to President Sauer conveying the view of FCC that he should make the appointment of the new men's athletic director; copies had been sent to the Board of Regents. Board members were surprised that FCC had taken a position and communicated it. The subsequent decision by President Sauer to recommend but not formally nominate Mr. Bay seemed to have been a desirable compromise. Professor Brenner emphasized that the letter was written at his own initiative, not in response to anything said or done by the administration.

## **6. Discussion with President Sauer**

Athletic Matters President Sauer joined the meeting during the discussion of the letter about the appointment of the men's athletic director; he commented that because he wanted to see academic issues emphasized much more strongly in intercollegiate athletics he felt it was appropriate to have received a letter from FCC.

The President also reported on the additions that had been agreed to for the new Recreational Sports facility: The administration will bring to the Regents a recommendation that air conditioning and 1000-1500 lockers be added to the facility. The students agreed to extend the fee for one year; the remaining additional money required will come from user fees. He said that he was glad the Board had raised questions; they did make it better because these additions will improve the facility.

The President reported that Rick Bay will be in the Twin Cities next week to meet with administrators and regents; if the new president agrees to the nomination, the appointment could be made soon. Bay, he said, is an outstanding candidate with a great breadth of interests who will do a good deal to integrate athletics and academics at the University.

On the matter of intercollegiate athletic facilities, the President said, plans will be clarified in the near future. He and Dean Stein have looked at the Timberwolves arena, at the St. Paul Civic Center, and have retained a consulting firm to examine the merits of various proposals to renovate Williams Arena for basketball, or for hockey. He said he believes that the Board of Regents will ask the central administration to bring a plan for athletic facilities and an indication of how they will be achieved. The plans will be discussed with the Assembly Committee on Intercollegiate Athletics; perhaps there will be open forums. The President said he suspected there will be strong sentiment for keeping the sports on campus. He said he will start the review process but will himself make no recommendations; he expects the review to be completed in 1989.

The President said he would also welcome any creative suggestions for preserving the "memorial" part of Memorial Stadium. One idea was to name the building the Memorial Recreational Sports Center.

Goals and Objectives The President provided to FCC copies of the 1988-89 goals and objectives for himself, for the Vice Presidents, and for the Chancellors. He commented that he normally establishes such objectives for all who work for him; in this case, he especially wanted them in writing in order that the new president would have them. President Sauer briefly reviewed his own goals and objectives; discussion ensued on two of them.

One goal was the integration of the Chancellors in the decision-making loop; they will not affect Twin Cities decisions but they had been left out too much in the past. One concern expressed was that interests outside of the coordinate campuses, the health sciences, and agriculture needed representation as well and that the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs could not be expected to represent the other parts of the Twin Cities campus. President Sauer said that the Vice Provost for FASE would be included.

Another goal was improved financial and personnel management; President Sauer said he expected in December the report of the joint University-Legislative committee he had appointed; one result may be that legislators can have more confidence in the University. The committee has no interest in interfering in the academic autonomy of the University but is divided on the extent of financial oversight that is required.

Relatedly, there is a need for about \$12-18 million, over the next 3-5 years, for computing for financial management. Some of the money will come from the reserves; some is being sought in the biennial request. The Coopers and Lybrand evaluation concluded that the University had no trouble in accounting for its money and that the total accounting/financial management system is about average; the changes being recommended would put the University in the front rank. They also, he said, gave the University very high marks in its cash management and investments; he said that former Vice President Lilly was unduly criticized because he actually did an outstanding job--the only reason the University had any reserves was because of Mr. Lilly's management.

Committee members debated the wisdom of putting the money into the financial management system. It was pointed out that this proposal should not distort priorities and that the University should seek to be in the top 5 academically, not in the maintenance of its books; others observed that the University should strike while the iron is hot and that the University should be among the top five in internal information systems--that the "average" ranking actually compared Minnesota to third-rate universities. Also at issue was cost of the shadow accounting system used extensively throughout the University and the savings that would be achieved by eliminating it.

Enrollment and Tuition President Sauer told the Committee he will not recommend any change in the agreement with the legislature; at present the University is on target and the new president can look at the issue later. The Committee began a discussion of tuition policy but decided to delay it until the SCC meeting.

## **7. Legislative Objectives: Discussion with Irwin Rubenstein**

The conversation began with a comment that one priority should be to change the reference group used for salary comparison purposes; that such a change would have a much greater long-term effect than a particular percent this year. Another committee member observed that the Big Ten has continued to slip and that there is reason to be concerned that if recruiting first rate faculty means paying high salaries, the morale of the faculty already here will be damaged. Professor Rubenstein agreed that the single most important thing the legislature could do to increase morale would be to provide an adequate salary increase.

Professor Rubenstein also said that he was trying to get at that point in his letters to the legislature but that it really involved the larger question of external relations, tying the University and its mission and making legislators understand the role of the University in higher education in the state. The University, he said, must also focus on higher education in the state; in dollars of taxes collected/dollars spent on students, Minnesota is 37th, but in dollars for higher education per citizen of the state, Minnesota ranks 5th or 6th. The real issue is the size of the higher education pie.

It was suggested that a high priority should be to get the priority items and principles of Academic Priorities funded. Professor Rubenstein said that the explanation to the legislature must be how this will help students and faculty or how the money will be used; the University, he commented, is too tied to explaining how it derived the request.

Other items mentioned by Committee members as of significance were the low technology of University classrooms, the General Research Fund, libraries and computers, and the disproportionate increase in the State Specials vis-a-vis the Operations and Maintenance funds.

The Committee concluded that representation of faculty views could not be solely the responsibility of Professor Rubenstein; the original agreement with him was that there would be faculty specialists on whom he could draw as needed. While the central administration and the regents should be the major advocates for the University, this Committee has responsibilities as well. Letters should be sent and functions with legislators should be arranged; President Sauer has agreed to set one up at Eastcliff in January. A meeting with the Governor was seen as another possibility. Professor Brenner noted that the President had asked that any who were going to interact with members of the legislature be first given some formal instruction rather than learn about the process by showing up.

Professor Rubenstein next outlined for the Committee the subjects of the biweekly letters he will be sending to the legislature. In addition to the topics he has chosen, Committee members suggested that he might address the number of Minnesota graduates serving as chief or senior executives in Minnesota businesses, the importance of strengthening the basic arts/sciences/humanities core of the University, and the wide variety of opportunities for undergraduates at the University. It was also suggested that he encourage legislators to share the letters with their local news sources and thereby communicate the information to their constituents.

The Committee adjourned at 12:00.

-- Gary Engstrand

University of Minnesota