

Minutes*

Faculty Consultative Committee
Thursday, April 8, 2004
1:15 – 3:00
300 Morrill Hall

Present: Judith Martin (chair), Gary Balas, Charles Campbell, Carol Chomsky, Dan Feeney, John Fossum, Emily Hoover, Scott Lanyon, Fred Morrison, Jeff Ratliff-Crain, Carol Wells

Absent: Jean Bauer, Susan Brorson, Tom Clayton, Gary Davis, Arthur Erdman, Marc Jenkins, Marvin Marshak, Martin Sampson

Guests: Senior Vice President and Provost Christine Maziar; President Robert Bruininks

Other: Sandra Ecklein (Office of the Senior Vice President and Provost); Kathryn Stuckert (Office of the Chief of Staff); John Ramsay (American Council on Education Fellow)

[In these minutes: (1) Benefits Advisory Committee membership; (2) discussion with Senior Vice President Maziar (rules/procedures for endowed chairs, various matters); (3) discussion with President Bruininks (various matters); (4) Senate reorganization]

Professor Martin convened the meeting at 1:15 and welcomed new members Carol Chomsky and Scott Lanyon, whose terms begin July 1 but who, along with John Sullivan, the other new member, have been invited to begin attending meetings this spring as their calendars permit.

1. Benefits Advisory Committee

Professor Martin reported that Professor Morrison, chair of the Benefits Advisory Committee, has notified her that there will be one faculty vacancy on the BAC beginning next year. The Committee agreed on the names of individuals it would nominate to the body that selects the members.

2. Discussion with Senior Vice President and Provost Maziar

Professor Martin welcomed Dr. Maziar to the meeting and began by asking Professor Fossum to relate the content of a recent Faculty Affairs committee discussion of endowed chairs.

Professor Fossum said that Faculty Affairs is interested in the appointment of endowed chairs--specifically, the appointment and review process. They heard from Ms. Kirk at the Foundation about support for the positions and then talked about whether all units adhere to the Regents' policy on awards and recognitions, which includes endowed chairs, about appointments, expectations, and terms. He said he believes there is the potential for problems unless there is some uniformity and oversight of the endowed chair positions. He said he recognizes this is a decentralized university, and nothing in the Regents' policy requires uniformity in appointment, but the policy does require an appointment letter. It

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is important for the University to provide information to people appointed to endowed chairs about the terms and conditions of the appointment in order to avoid problems in the future.

Identifying the terms also protects the University, Dr. Maziar observed. The lack of a precise appointment could lead to a default position (e.g., lifetime appointment) that might not be what is intended. The policy is clear that endowed chair appointments have certain characteristics; it should be communicated broadly to the units that the appointments require a letter. This sounds like a matter of the Provost enforcing existing policy, Professor Martin commented.

Are there any regulations about who appoints endowed chairs, Professor Wells asked? That is often a part of the gift agreement, Dr. Maziar said. If a unit is no longer in existence, then what happens, Professor Wells asked? The University has an obligation to make a good faith effort to find the donor or his or her heirs to talk about redirection of the funds. If the donor or heirs cannot be contacted, the University has the right to redirect use of the funds. Does the President make the decision, Professor Wells asked? Ultimately he does so, Dr. Maziar said, but in practice the funds are left near the home unit, in the college. Often, with program merger or dissolution, the management of endowed resources are part of the process. Professor Fossum said that the University needs to match as closely as possible the donor's original intent.

Dr. Maziar said she wished it part of the record that it is appropriate for the University to seek a donor to recraft an agreement or redirect funds, when it is in the University's best interests to do so. It is inappropriate for a donor to approach the University because he or she wants to move the money around. It is VERY BAD for a member of the University community, with eyes on the endowed funds in another unit, to approach a donor about changing the use of the endowment. For the last, there should be a gangplank prepared.

Dr. Maziar said it is worth a reminder to the deans about what should be in the appointment letters to endowed chairs.

Is there an expectation or policy about a tangible benefit to the recipient of an endowed chair position, Professor Campbell asked? The use of endowed chairs varies across the University, Dr. Maziar said. In some, the entire appointment of the faculty member is supported by the endowed chair. In others, the position provides an addition to the base salary and perhaps research support funds. Where the entire appointment is paid for, she said she was concerned that the University was sending a mixed message about what a chair is, because it could be held by an assistant or associate professor (because the endowment does not support the salary of a full professor but might for a more junior faculty member). Except perhaps in some parts of the liberal arts, Professor Martin commented. The University's chair program is a broad mix, Dr. Maziar said--supplement to a research program, supplement the salary, or supplement the department's capacity by creating a new position.

The Committee also spoke with Dr. Maziar about tuition, and in particular support for graduate students, instructional cost studies, events at the legislature, and searches for the IT dean and Dean of the Graduate School.

Professor Martin thanked Dr. Maziar for joining the meeting.

3. Discussion with President Bruininks

Professor Martin next welcomed the President to the meeting. The Committee discussed a number of matters with him.

-- The legislative process

-- The University's budget model (the President will appoint a small working group that will focus on the structure of the University's budget, not just focus on assessments, and that will make a report by late fall in order that a new budget model could be implemented by July, 2005)

-- The biennial request working group

-- The need to talk about academic issues, perhaps at the next "intellectual future" discussion to be held by this Committee in May

-- Two different study groups working on aspects of higher education (the Itasca Group, focused on the Twin Cities, an informal group of volunteers from business, etc., that has identified eight study topics, including the University of Minnesota, and the Citizens League panel commissioned by Governor Pawlenty). The Citizens League panel's work should also be on the FCC agenda in the near future. Faculty members should testify before both groups, the President suggested.

-- Establishment of an informal internal group of 8-9 people to meet periodically to discuss higher education issues, two of whom should come from this Committee, which would then initiate a broader discussion in the University.

-- The need for the faculty to appear at the Regents' budget forum in May; there should be presentations from this Committee and from the Finance and Planning committee.

Professor Martin thanked the President for joining the meeting.

4. Senate Reorganization

Professor Feeney next reported on the final recommendation from the reorganization working group.

The Senate that includes membership of P&A and Civil Service staff would total 276 members, 60% of whom would be faculty. The Senate Committee on Finance and Planning would be the only committee that would have a dual primary reporting structure, to both FCC and SCC; Professor Feeney said he had agreed that budget issues have an effect on everyone so that in addition to reporting to this Committee, Finance and Planning would also report to the Senate Consultative Committee. Committee members endorsed the proposal, with suggestions. One, that the Senate Consultative Committee have a majority of faculty, so the past FCC chair should be added as an ex officio voting member. Two, that colleges with over 20 eligible faculty/P&A members be guaranteed two seats in the Senate, those with 10-19 be granted one seat, and in those with fewer than 10, the individuals would be asked to choose another unit with which to affiliate for the purpose of Senate elections.

Professor Chomsky said it would be helpful to have a clear explanation of what primary/secondary reporting, and dual reporting, would mean, and how a committee would resolve conflicts if it received different instructions from parent committees. It was suggested that the Business and Rules Committee would have to decide.

Professor Martin adjourned the meeting at 3:25.

-- Gary Engstrand

University of Minnesota