

Minutes*

**Faculty Consultative Committee
July 24, 1989**

Present: Warren Ibele (chair), Mark Brenner, Norman Kerr, J. Bruce Overmier, M. Kathleen Price, Burton Shapiro, W. Phillips Shively, Michael Steffes, James VanAlstine, Walter Weyhmann

Guests: Vice President Shirley Clark, David Czeck (Minnesota Daily), Gayle Grika (Footnote), President Nils Hasselmo, David Morris (Minnesota Daily), Maureen Smith (Brief), Professor James Tracy

1. Report of the Chair(s) a. Ibele

Professor Ibele welcomed everyone to the meeting and began by discussing a conversation he had had at a breakfast meeting with Regent Charles Casey, the newly-elected Chair of the Board of Regents. Regent Casey has expressed an interest in promoting better communication between the Regents and the faculty; he and Professor Ibele considered several means by which this objective might be accomplished.

One option would be for the Executive Director of the Board to attend the meetings of the Committee. Professor Ibele noted that the meetings are open except for discussions of legal or personnel matters and that Ms. Muesing would be welcome to attend.

Another option would be a report by the chair of the Committee to the Board of Regents at their monthly meetings. It was left open whether or not this should be a regularly-scheduled item on the Regents' docket or such a report should be presented at the invitation of the Board or at less frequent intervals, perhaps quarterly.

Yet a third option would be the quarterly meetings, which last year were primarily social. These could perhaps be altered slightly, this year, so that at each meeting there could be discussion of one issue of importance to the faculty.

Professor Ibele said he had concluded that faculty representation on the Board was probably not in the cards and not worth pursuing. He solicited the views of Committee members and said he would follow up the discussion with a letter to Regent Casey outlining the Committee's views on how better communication might be achieved.

Committee members discussed and then concluded that any reporting or presentations should be made by the chair of FCC, not SCC, because the objective is better communication between the Board and the faculty; students, it was also noted, already have representatives on the committees of the Board as well as the "student" regent. The Committee was also of the view that if a report to the Board were to

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be implemented, it should not be viewed as a precedent for a variety of other interest groups to also make presentations on a recurring basis. Committee members seemed to agree that they would be disappointed if a report from the FCC chair simply became one of a series of reports. The Committee was also concerned that the report of the FCC chair, however finally structured, not cause the meetings of the Board to be unnecessarily lengthened.

1. Report of the Chair(s) b. Brenner

Professor Brenner reported that he had been informed by Vice President Clark that the deans wished to play a role in the Task Force on the Elimination of Mandatory Retirement. The alternatives appeared to be either a separate administrative committee to address the subject or appointment of two or three deans to the existing committee. Professor Scallen and apparently everyone else involved agreed there should be one committee; Professor Ibele then closed the meeting in order that FCC could nominate the deans to serve.*

Professor Brenner also raised another personnel matter during the period when the meeting was closed.

The Committee decided it would not nominate faculty members to serve on the Task Force on Liberal Education at this time; it concluded that the Provost should be advised to wait on launching the Task Force until the new Vice Provost for the Arts, Sciences, and Engineering has been appointed.

Committee members also discussed briefly the Task Force on Lengthening the Probationary Period, and concluded that it wished to have a consolidated list of the faculty whose names had been forwarded by the deans as candidates for service on governance committees.

2. Funds for Improvement of Large Undergraduate Classes

The Committee was joined by Professor James Tracy, 1988-89 chair of the Committee on Undergraduate Education. Professor Tracy reviewed briefly for FCC members the assumptions behind the recommendations which had come from his Committee; they were: That at present there are nightmarishly large undergraduate classes; that large classes will not go away, even with decreased enrollment; and that changes to be made would not be pedagogically innovative but rather improvements in the classes. Their objective was to reduce confusion and disorientation in these classes as well as continuity--so the changes that worked would be continued. The Committee had no idea that hard money would become available and acted in the hope that departments and colleges could work out a way to continue whatever improvements might be developed.

Committee members expressed support for the aims of the Committee recommendations and recalled that their reservations, expressed at a meeting earlier in the year, had more to do with the possibly ephemeral nature of any improvements which might be made but which had no hard funding behind them. Vice President Clark reaffirmed that there would \$200,000 of recurring funds committed to the improvement of large undergraduate courses; the money will be distributed by the Vice Provost for Arts,

*The Daily reporters at the meeting protested Professor Ibele's decision to close the meeting; it was agreed that this protest would be noted formally in the minutes.

Sciences, and Engineering based on proposals submitted by departments. She also reported that Academic Affairs has been shifting money, several hundred thousand dollars, from Educational Development Programs and proposes to make them available to the Vice Provost for instructional improvement.

It was agreed that the Vice Provost will have to identify those areas and classes which are most problematic; Committee members suggested that using an arbitrary threshold, such as all classes larger than 100, might lead to distributing the funds too thinly or to putting the money in the wrong places; it might, for example, be the very large classes which will require the most new support.

Asked if his Committee had thought about a structure for sharing information about outcomes of attempted improvements or evaluation of outcomes, Professor Tracy responded that the latter had received attention but the former had not. Vice President Clark observed that it would be useful to have some measures of success; Academic Affairs should not initially give out the money with the thought that it would be a permanent distribution. In some cases it might become recurring; in others it might not, or there might be a need to evaluate a change before making a decision. She maintained that the simplest approach possible should be used to distribute the money, rather than have rounds and rounds of reviews.

Committee members expressed reservations about a proposal that the colleges or departments come up with matching money; some departments do not have the discretionary funds and as a result some of the classes which most need attention might not be improved. Vice President Clark noted that some departments could afford to match, others could not, and that no decision about matching needed to be made now.

It was suggested that there would be a need to get information out to the faculty on the improvements that have been tried and shown to work; Vice President Clark added that a small portion of the funds could be used to bring to campus those who know the issues which surround teaching large courses.

The Committee congratulated the central administration on obtaining the \$200,000 and Professor Tracy for the work of his Committee.

3. Involvement of the Unionized Faculty in Governance

There was brief discussion of the wish of the Health Science faculty at Duluth to be involved in governance and the possibility that steps might be taken to involve as well those faculty who are collectively organized. It was the sense of the Committee that rather than take a trip to Duluth, with a public meeting which might be seen as provocative or have other undesired results, it would be better for the Committee to work with appropriate University officials to set up a "meet and confer" session with the organized faculty to determine if there were any interest in participating in the governance system and, if there were, at what level.

Professor Ibele agreed to make preliminary inquiries on what steps should next be taken.

4. Discussion with President Hasselmo

Professor Ibele welcomed President Hasselmo to the meeting and asked him if he had any matters

upon which he wished to comment.

Searches and Position Responsibilities The President reported that he had had to postpone his meeting with the third candidate for Provost and Vice President, because of his illness, but that he was evaluating the reports from those who met with the candidates and hoped to have a decision soon.

President Hasselmo told the Committee that he intended to move ahead on the searches for the Vice Provost and for the Vice President for Student Affairs but he agreed that the Provost should play a role in the selection and that the responsibilities of the two positions needed to be clarified. He said that he saw the core functions of the two jobs as quite different: The Vice Provost will be in charge of curricular activities, programs, the single point of entry, and general educational requirements; the Vice President for Student Affairs will be concerned with the general environment for students and logistical units such as financial aid. He observed that the environment for undergraduates at the University is the institution's Achilles' heel. He agreed that further clarification of the responsibilities of the two positions would be needed and said that he must be sure that the two individuals appointed to the jobs can work together.

Asked about the relationship between the Vice President for Student Affairs and the Vice President for Academic Affairs, the President replied that the Student Affairs vice president would act under the leadership of the Provost and Academic Affairs; what is done in Student Affairs about enhancing the intellectual environment would be an integral part of planning in Academic Affairs.

Legislative Request The President told the Committee that he had recently completed meetings on all four of the coordinate campuses and will do so in the near future with the individual colleges; each is being asked to look at their physical facilities priorities changes because the University must report to the legislature by October 1 on the capital request. After each unit has reviewed its priorities, the entire University list will be examined to see where it stands. This will be an important session, he noted, because the University has received a lot of planning money and it will be essential to obtain construction money for the important projects. He promised to get back to the Committee with further information.

Enrollment The President said he was also looking at the Academic Priorities issues in the units, especially enrollment. The University must provide to the legislature this Fall a more fine-tuned description of enrollment plans (such as decoupling the Twin Cities from the coordinate campuses). His notion is that enrollment be identified by campuses and clusters; the system would then be the composite of those smaller groups. The President also noted that while enrollment limits were one way to enhance the University, that also means that some people will not be served and will have to find other programs-- which will require money. There must be, he observed, a balance, and he said he has no patented answer to enrollment questions. He expressed a wish to return to the Committee in the Fall to discuss the issues further.

Tuition President Hasselmo reported that the Board of Regents will continue discussion of enrollment in the Fall and that the subject should also be on the agenda of this Committee. Whatever conclusions are reached will have an effect on legislative strategy in the next biennium.

M-SPAN The University is participating in M-SPAN 2, the study of higher education needs in Greater Minnesota. The system heads are currently considering how to respond to the legislative request to meet needs for lower division education in the Twin Cities and for the practitioner-oriented graduate

degrees. The University has responsibilities in these areas, he remarked, but its activities must be consonant with its quality and general mission. The President said he would brief the Committee in September on M-SPAN 1 and 2.

Committee members voiced concern about any attempt by the University to respond to the needs identified in M-SPAN 1 without adequate funding or to do so without regard to Academic Priorities and the goal of improving quality by reducing enrollment. While providing more graduate degree opportunities might be consistent with the University's unique capacities and with its mission, it would be folly to expand master's programs without sufficient funds.

4. Task Forces

Committee members deliberated a short while about the possible overlap between the work of the Task Force on Lengthening the Probationary Period and the Task Force on the Elimination of Mandatory Retirement; it is possible that elimination of mandatory retirement could lead to an entirely new evaluation system, which could in turn have an impact on the tenure system and probationary appointments. It was agreed that Professor Dittman, chair of the Senate Committee on Faculty Affairs, should nominate 2-3 faculty members to sit on the Task Force on Lengthening the Probationary Period in order to ensure that SCFA could keep informed on both issues.

5. Library Funds

The Committee talked about the shortage of funds facing the libraries. The Senate Research Committee has recommended that Indirect Cost Recovery funds not be used for ongoing library acquisitions, but the establishment of PUF chairs frequently requires major build-ups in collections. Everyone seemed to agree that the legislative request for \$5 million was appropriate, but the State only provided \$1.044 million--and thinks it has solved the problem.

It was agreed that the new Librarian, Thomas Shaughnessy, would be invited to meet with the Committee to review these issues.

6. Thanks

Professor Ibele commented that the wisdom of the retiring Committee members had helped it and the University through some very difficult times; the Committee applauded and thanked those members whose service on the Consultative Committee was finished: Mark Brenner, Burton Shapiro, and W. Phillips Shively.

The Committee adjourned at 11:20.

-- Gary Engstrand