



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
TWIN CITIES

All University Senate Consultative Committee

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MINUTES
Senate Facilitative Committee
November 10, 1980

Monday, November 10, 1:30 p.m., B12 Morrill Hall.

Present: Hexter, Howe, Lehmborg, Sarles (for Mueller), Rippie, Sullivan, Swan, Wheeler, Wood, Hobbie, Eaton, Hasselmo, Wallace, Caldecott, Heydinger, Pflaum.

Eaton explained that all members of the Facilitative Committee had received minutes of the SCC meeting at which Hasselmo and members of the Planning Council discussed identification and ways of discussing issues that will affect the University in the coming years. She turned the conduct of the meeting over to Vice President Hasselmo.

Hasselmo explained that the Planning Council wants to develop ways to focus on important issues. If we look at too many we don't make much headway. It is better to identify a critical issue and devote an entire academic year to it. He hopes that we can develop a mode in which members of both the Senate and the Administration cooperate in addressing such an issue. The "Barriers" issue looked most promising, but in substance and with respect to this mode. He hopes that we can reach some conclusions by the end of this year.

Sarles asked why the administration did not handle it alone. Hasselmo replied that faculty need to identify the core tasks in this area. Howe agreed and said that for that reason it should be predominantly a faculty committee with administrative support.

Sullivan asked what will be done with any recommendations, and by whom? Hasselmo thought they would go both to the President and to the Senate or appropriate levels therein.

Hexter wondered if the removal of barriers, whatever they are, won't require spending money that we don't have now. He suggested that the administration attend to the task of getting money and hand it over to collegiate units for spending--that that would be the best way of handling barriers. He fears that this will be a "make work" committee. Hasselmo agreed that times are hard, but suggested that planning is especially necessary now in order for rational budget review.

Sarles pointed out that it is hard to plan when we don't know who "we" are--that we are very diverse. Hasselmo agreed. Nevertheless there are concerns that all faculty share, one being perhaps that we are torn between many concerns.

Heydinger wants a group to attend to all-University issues, and thinks that we have no way of doing that now. This will be a way to discuss issues.

Hasselmo explained that originally this issue was called "faculty vitality," but that that name carried unfortunate connotations too. He sees the issue as raising the question of how faculty can continue to be stimulated without the kind of turnover that we've had in the past. This will involve questions about leaves, on-campus conferences, etc.

Swan approved of this narrower clear way of describing the issue. She thought it might be possible for a group to tackle these and come up with some conclusions. Broadly defined, "barriers" is too much to give to a faculty group--it's a barrier itself. Committees do better with a fairly defined task. Is it possible as a first step to take the "barriers" pot and divide it up more clearly and see how to deal separately with the divisions?

Hasselmo said that the Planning Council didn't want to be overly directive before it went to a special committee. Wallace said that so dividing the issue is the task he sees for the first six weeks of a group's work. Wheeler said that figuring out what barriers are is more manageable than discussing the whole issue. Then attention can be given to ways of destroying the barriers. Heydinger agreed but Swan worried that it was still too big.

Sarles asked why the administration doesn't hire a group to do this. Hasselmo replied that the Planning Council wanted to avoid the task force syndrome--with people working too much in a vacuum.

Sullivan sees as a first step asking faculty what their ideal world here would be. Approaching the issue positively might avoid some paranoia. Wheeler worries that the term 'productivity' entails lower costs as well as increasing products. He said we want to prevent people's looking on this as a "speed up."

Howe agreed that there is pessimism and cynicism around us. But that doesn't mean we should leave things alone. We should identify manageable, controllable agenda. He would like to see someone trying to address such issues as getting old together, feeling ennui, etc.

Hasselmo admitted that we may not have the firmest grip on these issues, but sees the role of faculty at the core of problems that the administration should help to solve. He hopes we can lay out the specifics.

Wood reminded the group that the University is large and the barriers will vary from place to place. If we stay at the all-University level, important barriers might get lost. Heydinger agreed that we have to identify those strata of the population that we want to get to.

Swan reminded us also that some things are governed by individual departments, others by the University at large. A joint Senate/Administration group probably won't be able to get at departmental problems and policies.

Sullivan said that some people will need more equipment, others long stretches of quiet time. She would like to see a humanist think tank created, but admitted that this would be more helpful to people in her discipline than in others. Wood added that individuals vary just as much as departments. He asked if similar studies have been done at other universities. Heydinger reported that the Planning Council doesn't know of any.

Hasselmo said that Dean Wallace and Professors Clark and Corcoran have done related studies and that these would be looked at by the appointed group. He added that he hoped today we could name a group so they could begin to develop an initial plan for studying the matters. Rippie suggested that it might be useful in charging this initial group to suggest various levels of problems and possible remedies. Hasselmo thought the diagnostic task would be the only thing looked at at this stage.

Sullivan suggested that the study might lead to a research project for some of the faculty eventually involved. Hasselmo asked what people should be asked to begin the six-week study. Lehmborg said it was essential that SCEP be involved in some way, but that a variety of committees should be drawn from. Howe suggested that someone from Academic Affairs be involved. Wheeler suggested broad representation.

Eaton said that whatever group is chosen, it should report back to a number of related committees so that several people are kept informed about progress.

Sarles asked if there would be funds for bringing in outsiders, and Hasselmo said maybe. Howe thought it too early at this initial stage, but that it might be helpful later.

It was finally agreed that one member each, and one alternate, would be chosen by the chairs from Research, SCEP, SCRAP, and SCFA, and that they would be joined by Wallace, Clark, Corcoran and members of the Planning Council. The new, at least temporary title for the issue, will be "Issues in faculty development." The Senate Consultative Committee will pick the chair of the group.

Minutes submitted by Marcia Eaton.