

Minutes\*

**Faculty Consultative Committee**  
**Thursday, August 9, 2012**  
**1:00 – 3:00**  
**121 Pillsbury Hall**

Present: Sally Gregory Kohlstedt (chair), Linda Bearinger, Scott Lanyon, Russell Luepker, Alon McCormick, James Pacala, Ned Patterson, Jeff Ratliff-Crain

Absent: none counted for a summer meeting

Guests: none

Other: Jon Steadland (Office of the President); Ken Savary (Office of the Board of Regents)

[In these minutes: (1) report of the chair; (2) sabbatical supplement guidelines; (3) revision of the teaching awards policy; (4) cost and revenue data; (5) the St. Paul campus discussion]

**1. Report of the Chair**

Professor Kohlstedt convened the meeting at 1:00 and began with updates on various matters.

-- The resolution from the Disabilities Issues committee will be taken up later. While this Committee was willing to act, Professor Kennedy, chair of the Disabilities Issues committee, indicated she wished to consult with the committee on the suggestions from this Committee before bringing back a revised resolution for action.

-- Professor Kohlstedt met with the chair and chair-elect of the P&A Consultative Committee (PACC) and several topics arose in the conversation. The PACC is are keeping a close eye on the job classification system work that is underway, they intend to work more closely with Government Relations because they believe they can help with work with the legislature, and they had a few suggestions for the revised teaching awards policy.

-- Professor Kohlstedt reported that Professor Hancher had raised questions about the University's web sites: the search engine is sometimes ineffective (Google often works better); more important, the web pages are not adapted for mobile devices; and the home page is "cluttered." The Committee agreed to forward the questions to the Senate Committee on Information Technologies and ask for a report.

-- The "thank you" event for Professors Cramer, Jacobs, Chomsky, Boyle, and Hayes will be on August 30.

-- Professor Kohlstedt reviewed the five topics of discussion at the centennial events and the panelists who have agreed to participate. Committee members also discussed the invitation list for the January 31

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conversation about governance that will include the president, the provost, a member of the Board of Regents, and Professor Fred Morrison.

-- Professor Kohlstedt reported that she had, as the Committee requested, winnowed down the questions provided to the guests attending the Committee's retreat at the end of August.

-- The Public Engagement Council has asked for a representative from this Committee. Professor Cramer has volunteered to serve as that representative; the Committee unanimously endorsed the appointment.

## **2. Sabbatical Supplement Guidelines**

Professor Sheets had edited the sabbatical supplement guidelines, Professor Kohlstedt noted, and all references to single-semester leaves have been deleted because they are funded in such different ways. She is still awaiting a response from the Office of the General Counsel to ensure that the terminology is legally correct. She asked if there were additional comments.

Committee members agreed on two changes. One, where the guidelines suggest the appointment of a faculty committee to review sabbatical supplement applications, the guidelines should stipulate that the faculty members to serve should not also have decanal appointments in the college. Two, in the list of suggested criteria to be used in judging applications, the idea of professional development should be separated from the idea of contributions to the profession. The Committee discussed whether there should be priority given to someone who has not been provided a supplement before (or recently) over someone who has been awarded a supplement more recently; the decision a college makes might hinge on whether it concludes, for a particular applicant, that professional development is more important than contribution to the profession. (The notion of "taking turns" was mentioned.)

Professor Kohlstedt emphasized that these are guidelines, not policy. It would take considerably more effort to convert them to policy and said she believes that if these guidelines are in place, they give faculty members a reference point for considering their college's process and a means to suggest changes. Professor Luepker said he leaned toward having a policy, in the interest of fairness and transparency. Professor Lanyon suggested leaving them as guidelines for now and ask the faculty in two years if the process is working in their college or if additional intervention is required. The Committee concluded that it would propose them as guidelines now and revisit the process in the future. The fundamental problem, Professor Lanyon observed, is that the pool of funds for sabbatical supplements is way too small; he urged that the Committee keep its eye on that problem.

The Committee agreed that Professor Kohlstedt should ask Provost Hanson to present the guidelines to the deans. She said that she would also ensure that they are distributed to the coordinate campuses where appropriate and so will provide the guidelines to Senior Vice President Jones.

It was agreed that the Senate Committee on Faculty Affairs should take up the question of guidelines for single-semester leaves, if possible. Provost Hanson and Senior Vice President Jones could advise the deans that the guidelines could also be useful for awarding single-semester leaves, acknowledging that unlike sabbatical supplements, which carry central funding, the funding for single-semester leaves is all at the local level.

### **3. Revision of the Teaching Awards Policy**

Professor Kohlstedt turned next to the revised policy on teaching awards, an item on which it has been suggested that the Committee act on behalf of the Faculty Senate in order that the administration can implement the changes in the 2012-13 academic year. She reported that she had worked with Vice Provost Carney and Dr. Gram and had consulted with the PACC. One major change is that the award would be a lump-sum \$15,000 rather than a salary augmentation; the details of how the \$15,000 would be awarded (salary versus professional development) remains uncertain, largely because of potential tax implications. The proposed change means the award would be more equitable (winning it early in a career would not mean many more years of salary augmentation compared to someone who won it later in his or her career), lump-sum awards are more common among the University's peer institutions, and it would save money (while also allowing funding for community service awards and an increase in the award for advising as well as providing funding for maintenance of the Scholars Walk). The PACC leaders were more interested in the funding and were not concerned about the different titles to be granted to faculty and P&A staff who win the award. The P&A staff who win the award would be noted on the Scholars Walk and would be members of ADT. (The augmentations provided to those who have already won the award would be continued.)

Professor Bearinger commented that what is lost in a lump-sum award is the sense of obligation to an ongoing commitment to teaching, a loss of duty and acknowledgment. Professor Ratliff-Crain reported that several members of the Academy of Distinguished Teachers (ADT) talked to Vice Provost Carney about the change and wonder if it will eventually lead to the dismantling of the ADT. There is a difference from other awards because it is a continuing augmentation, and while there is no designated obligation to participate in ADT, and some do not, many do. Has there been any response from Dr. Carney about the possibility of continuing support for professional development, or is that door shut, he asked. Professor Kohlstedt reported that Dr. Carney's wants the awards to be clear, equitable, and tidy.

Professor Lanyon questioned whether the Committee should vote to approve the policy without confirmation of the flexibility that would be allowed with the \$15,000 award; he said he would not be very supportive if there is no flexibility in the use of the money.

Professor Pacala observed that teaching takes the biggest hit in the proposed revision. The academic advising award is increased, a community service award is created, and funds are directed to the Scholars Walk. If someone is a great teacher who has more than five years left in his or her career (i.e., five years times the current \$3000 salary augmentation provided to awardees), he or she takes a hit. The proposal cuts cash to teachers and increases or retains the awards to others. That sends a message. If the goal is to get award funds under control, they should all be cut proportionally. Or one can say that the other activities are also important and have been underfunded, noting that some stipends have been increased and a new one on service added, Professor Kohlstedt rejoined. This proposal says the University has been over-valuing teaching and under-valuing advising and community service, Professor Pacala said. And under-valuing maintenance of the Scholars Walk, Professor Lanyon added. The latter is a problem Professor Kohlstedt said.

Professors Bearinger and Ratliff-Crain repeated their objections to the proposal. Professor Lanyon said it did not seem to be a good idea because the current version encourages younger faculty to get involved.

Professor Kohlstedt reported that the augmentation makes the program expensive, both in the awards and in the administration of the program. If someone is a good teacher, he or she is a good teacher because they want to be, not because of this award.

The change is driven by budget constraints, Professor Lanyon observed.

Because there was an insufficient number of voting members of the Committee present, Professor Kohlstedt said she would ask for an email vote on the proposed changes.

#### **4. Cost and Revenue Data**

Professor Lanyon explained that with all of the talk about the rising costs of higher education, both here and nationally, faculty members are not in a position to answer if they are asked why costs are increasing. It would be helpful if the administration could provide information on the big pots of costs and revenues and how they have changed in the last 25 years in order that faculty members can be good spokespersons for the University.

The cost is one part; the leading argument on the revenue side is that the University has lost millions of dollars in state funding.

Professor Kohlstedt recalled a recent article that had been circulated to the Committee that discussed whether faculty governance is part of the reason for the increased costs. One reader comment pointed out that compliance, technology, and other factors have increased in cost dramatically over the last several years, and the article suggested that the reason some costs had increased was because the faculty had NOT been involved in the discussions. If the Committee could have some kind of analysis of the costs, that would help.

It will be important to have agreement on one format that can be circulated widely, Professor Pacala suggested. It might be simple as a couple of pie charts, something easily digestible and illuminating. Professor McCormick agreed that the questions come up constantly with students, parents, neighbors, and others.

#### **5. The St. Paul Campus Discussion**

Professor Kohlstedt said the Committee had had a good discussion of the future of the St. Paul campus; it appears that little has happened since the report was issued in 2008. What should the Committee do to follow up from its discussion last spring? It appeared that Provost Hanson thought the issues are worth further work, and there were modest suggestions to improve the lives of those who work and study on the St. Paul campus. She asked Professor McCormick if the Committee on Educational Policy would pursue the question of student opinions about their experiences and the question of course offerings on the St. Paul campus. The provision of "hotel" space on the Minneapolis campus for St. Paul campus faculty members who must spend time in Minneapolis was also suggested. Neither of those topics addresses the big issues facing St. Paul, but attention to them could improve morale and efficiency.

Professor Bearinger said she thought this Committee should talk about the larger issues first, before referring anything out to committees, and suggested it talk with an urban planning expert on what

it requires to have an effective campus. She also suggested the Committee talk with newly-appointed Vice President Wheelock about the physical elements of the issues.

Professor Luepker commented that the issue is in part a "feelings of detachment" versus a real decline in the quality of space. The St. Paul campus has better space than Minneapolis but still feels "out there." The big issue is how to make people feel like they are part of a whole campus.

Professor Lanyon (who is housed on the St. Paul campus) related that if one asks students on the St. Paul campus, they would say that one drawback is that as soon as one walks off the campus, one is in a residential neighborhood. That is an insurmountable problem and the zoning is very tightly controlled. On the north side there are agricultural fields. A big change was the loss of the Cherrywood Room, a restaurant that was a place to go and to take candidates, for example. There is nothing like it now. It is important to have a place like that.

Professor Kohlstedt commented that there are intractable elements to the problem but there are also small things that can be done to help. Professor Ratliff-Crain wondered if the campus is treated as distinct from Minneapolis or if they are both treated as the Twin Cities campus. If nothing else, there needs to be a survey of students, graduate and undergraduate, to find out what they would like to see on the campus.

Professor Kohlstedt thanked everyone for coming and adjourned the meeting at 3:00.

-- Gary Engstrand

University of Minnesota