

Minutes*

**Faculty Consultative Committee
Fall Retreat
Wednesday, August 29, 2012
8:00 – 5:00
Minnesota Humanities Center**

- Present: Sally Gregory Kohlstedt (chair), Linda Bearinger, Avner Ben-Ner, Peter Bitterman, Brian Buhr, Chris Cramer, Will Durfee, Nancy Ehlke, Michael Hancher, Scott Lanyon, Russell Luepker, Elaine Tyler May, Alon McCormick, James Pacala, Ned Patterson, Jeff Ratliff-Crain, Rebecca Ropers-Huilman, George Sheets
- Absent: James Cloyd, Richard Ziegler
- Guests: President Eric Kaler, Vice Provost and Dean Henning Schroeder, Vice Provost and Dean Robert McMaster, Senior Vice President and Provost Karen Hanson, Vice President Richard Pfutzenreuter
- Other: Amy Phenix (Chief of Staff)

[In these minutes: (1) discussion with President Kaler; (2) change in policy on teaching awards; (3) discussion with Vice Provost Schroeder; (4) discussion with Vice Provost McMaster; (5) discussion with Provost Hanson; (6) update on the Senate centennial; (7) faculty productivity statement; (8) consultation on changes to Regents' policies; (9) the role of advisers in preliminary oral examinations; (10) discussion with Vice President Pfutzenreuter]

1. Discussion with President Kaler

Professor Kohlstedt convened the meeting at 8:00, reviewed a list of issues the Committee needed to take up during the retreat, reported that she would announce to all guests that the discussions are off the record in order to encourage candor, and noted two questions that had been posed in advance to every guest invited to the retreat ("What upcoming topics on your plate can shared governance help you with most and how?" and "What interactions do you have with shared governance that you consider a poor use of your time, if any, and what restructuring might we accomplish to remedy that?") Each of the guests addressed the two questions.

Professor Kohlstedt then welcomed President Kaler to discuss a number of matters. The president touched upon the higher education landscape, the University's mission and its goals, "excellence," comparison by metrics with aspirational and other peers, budget perspectives, and strategies for moving forward. Committee members raised questions related to external communications, metrics for evaluating institutional change, shared governance and consultation, program evaluation, post-tenure review, political engagement, MOOCs, reviews of administrators, and leadership skill sets.

Professor Kohlstedt thanked the president for joining the retreat.

* These minutes reflect discussion and debate at a meeting of a committee of the University of Minnesota Senate; none of the comments, conclusions, or actions reported in these minutes represents the views of, nor are they binding on, the Senate, the Administration, or the Board of Regents.

2. Change in Policy on Teaching Awards

Professor Kohlstedt reviewed the proposed changes in the teaching-award policy: Adding P&A eligibility and changing the monetary award from a permanent salary augmentation to a one-time award of \$15,000. She noted that there had been considerable discussion of what awards mean and the difference in implications for a one-time award and continuing augmentation, that the provost's office needed to save money and the change to a one-time award would allow savings while also permitting a new award, an increase in the advising award, and funding for maintenance of the Scholars Walk. The proposal for \$15,000 is larger than most awards given by peer institutions; one larger one is at Michigan, at \$30,000, but only three such awards are given each year. The Committee had conversations in July and earlier this month, with slightly different groups present each time, and while the majority favored the proposed changes, there was a strong minority view to the contrary, and she wished the Committee to have a final conversation before making a decision.

Several Committee members objected to including a discussion of the costs of the Scholars Walk in a debate about teaching-award policy changes because the two are unrelated. It was noted that the eligibility of instructional P&A staff members had already been endorsed by the Faculty Senate and was not controversial. Professors Bearinger, May, and Ratliff-Crain indicated a dislike for the change to the lump sum award because the latter does not seem to imply a continuing obligation to excellence in teaching and to the Academy of Distinguished Teachers (ADT). Professor Ratliff-Crain reported that the ADT had only learned about the proposed change indirectly and raised concerns about it in a meeting with Vice Provost Carney. Professors Kohlstedt and Cramer noted that there are questions of equity involved; a faculty member who receives a teaching award at age 45 could receive the augmentation for 20 years or more; someone who received it at age 65 was not likely to do so, and someone who received the award may in the meantime have gone into an administrative position or otherwise become less involved with teaching. Moreover, the only other award at the University that carries a continuing augmentation is the Regents Professorship. The title of "distinguished teaching professor" and ADT membership is permanent in any event. Professor Ropers-Huilman commented that people are motivated by different things; she received a teaching award that included \$1000 at her previous institution—but what mattered was the peer recognition; here, the membership in the ADT is a reward in addition to the stipend. Professor Hancher said he understood that costs need to be reduced but expressed regret that there had been no endowment set up at the time the Scholars Walk was constructed to pay its annual maintenance costs, and he agreed that issue should be separated from the consideration of changes to the policy.

Later in the meeting the Committee voted 10-1 to act on behalf of the Faculty Senate to approve the proposed changes in the policy on teaching awards. As provided in Faculty Senate bylaws, the action will be presented to the Faculty Senate for information, at which time the Faculty Senate has the authority to overrule the Committee.

3. Discussion with Vice Provost and Dean Schroeder

Professor Kohlstedt welcomed Dean Schroeder to the meeting, who discussed shared governance, quality metrics, funding for graduate education, support for academic quality, including graduate program reviews. Professor May asked that at some point the relationship between (1) funding and (2) the relationship between graduate and undergraduate programs be taken up.

4. Discussion with Vice Provost and Dean McMaster

Professor Kohlstedt welcomed Dean McMaster to the meeting. He provided updated information about undergraduate education, including national trends, freshmen characteristics, data on applicants and enrollment, retention and graduation, and shared governance. He emphasized the importance of faculty sending the message to students that taking five years to graduate is not OK because it increases student debt and University costs. Dean McMaster also responded to questions about how to allow students to take advantage of the breadth and depth of the University, discussed the interaction of the budget model and undergraduate education, and what the impact of MOOCs might be, if any, on the University. Dean McMaster also mentioned the upcoming accreditation of the Twin Cities campus and the emphasis that the Higher Learning Commission is placing on demonstrating student learning—and how the campus is working on assessment and the Student Learning Outcomes adopted by the Senate.

5. Discussion with Provost Hanson

Professor Kohlstedt welcomed Provost Hanson to the meeting. Provost Hanson discussed e-learning initiatives and the faculty role in the curriculum, intellectual property, interdisciplinary teaching and research and how the central administration might play a more helpful role in facilitating both, and reorganization of the Graduate School. She and the Committee also discussed issues of equity and diversity, the compact process, and the process for reviewing deans. Professor Kohlstedt thanked the provost for joining the retreat.

6. Update on the Senate Centennial

Professor Kohlstedt provided copies of the issues abstracts that panels will discuss at three different Senate meetings during the upcoming year. Committee members discussed the wording of the questions and made suggestions for changes.

7. Faculty Productivity Statement

Professor Sheets recalled that this Committee had asked the Senate Committee on Faculty Affairs to formulate a statement on productivity. What was problematic was the audience: To whom was the statement addressed and for what purpose? The request was made in response to various measures of faculty productivity used in Texas and Florida but the audience was never made clear. As it stands the statement is too long; if it is for the faculty, it needs some changes and if it is for the public or legislatures, it needs a great deal of change. One suggestion was that the statement could be provided to University Relations, who could draw on it for their purposes as needed.

Professor Cramer expressed the view that the statement is a good document and reflects a thoughtful discussion. It could be provided, for example, to the *Chronicle of Higher Education* as a reflection on faculty work at a public research university. Professor Kohlstedt agreed and suggested that the Committee on Faculty Affairs review the statement again, but with the charge to develop it as an op-ed piece and to talk with University Relations about it.

8. Consultation on Changes to Board of Regents Policies

Professor Kohlstedt provided copies of a matrix indicating which Regents' policies should be discussed by which Senate committees when changes are proposed. The matrix is outdated and needs review; she asked for volunteers to serve on an ad hoc subcommittee to work with the Board of Regents' office on revising the matrix. Professor Cramer volunteered; it was also agreed that Professor Kohlstedt would ask Professor Gonzales, the former chair of the Committee, to participate. (Professor Durfee, who participated in the process that created the matrix in the first place, observed that one learns a lot by reading Board policies.) It was also agreed that committee chairs should review the matrix.

9. The Role of Advisers in Preliminary Oral Examinations

Professor Kohlstedt reported that the staff in the Graduate School had alerted her to a problem with one of the new policies on graduate education related to the role of the adviser in preliminary oral examinations. The policy calls for oral examining committees to consist of two or three faculty from the program, one faculty member from outside the program, and the adviser. A number of units in the AHC and elsewhere do not allow the adviser to talk or vote in the preliminary oral examination and the Graduate School has for years granted those programs an exception to the prevailing rule. Professor Kohlstedt suggested referring the question to the Committee on Educational Policy and asking for a recommendation. The Committee concurred.

10. Discussion with Vice President Pfutzenreuter

Professor Kohlstedt welcomed Vice President Pfutzenreuter to the retreat. Mr. Pfutzenreuter highlighted the major issues for the year for the Finance and Operations Committee of the Board of Regents and those of particular interest to the Committee on Finance and Planning. He also discussed the possibility of providing relatively simple financial information for faculty and staff to help them understand the University's finances and to help them educate the community. He reviewed the long-term financing of the University and the framework for the 2013-15 biennial request to the legislature. Professor Kohlstedt thanked Vice President Pfutzenreuter for joining the retreat.

Professor Kohlstedt adjourned the retreat at 4:45.

-- Gary Engstrand