

JUNE 3, 1993

The sixth meeting of the Faculty Senate for 1992-93, was convened in 25 Law Building, Minneapolis campus, on Thursday, June 3, 1993, at 2:55 p.m (immediately following the Twin Cities Campus Assembly meeting). Coordinate campuses were linked by telephone. Checking or signing the roll as present were 102 voting faculty members. Professor Benjamin Liu, Faculty Senate Vice Chair, presided.

I. FACULTY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE
University of Minnesota Strategic Planning
Discussion

Professor Liu introduced Professors Carl Adams, Irwin Rubenstein, and Thomas Scott, members of the Planning Steering Committee, to discuss the strategic planning efforts at the University. A number of months ago, Professor Scott said, the President impressed upon the University that it would have to change its ways in order to protect its values. Higher education in general is facing enormous changes and it is important that the University give careful consideration to its long-range planning efforts in order to be positioned to move into the remainder of this century and beyond as it meets these changes. Professor Scott reminded senators that the University has been engaged in a number of important strategic planning and implementation efforts for quite sometime, including Commitment to Focus, retrenchment and reallocation, and the closure of the Waseca campus. It is important to note that the current strategic planning effort is in the midst of a constantly changing environment, both in terms of higher education in general and within the State of Minnesota. Planning participants will be looking hard at what the University does, what it should and should not be doing, and whom it serves. The planning process will be operating at two levels simultaneously--at the institutional level and at the unit level. Professor Scott emphasized that the planning process is being carried out by and through the normal University decision-making and consultative processes. The Planning Steering Committee, comprised of a number of faculty and administrators, is primarily responsible for organizing the planning activities and moving the project along. Professor Scott reviewed some of the planning goals, which are to 1) make decisions regarding institutional directions and integrate those plans with the unit plans, 2) build strategic planning mechanisms into the regular decision-making structures at the University, and 3) link planning and budgetary processes together. In conclusion, Professor Scott outlined the timeline for the strategic planning process over the next year. Some key dates are November/December 1993 when the University's mission statement and strategic initiatives are to be accomplished, April 1994 when the institutional and unit plans will be integrated, and July/August 1994 when the planning and budgetary processes will be brought together for the 1995 legislative session. The Steering Committee, Professor Scott said, is very interested in obtaining faculty input regarding the identification of important planning issues and questions. To assist the discussion, the first status report outlining the planning process and identifying issues was distributed.

During the course of the discussion, the following suggestions were offered:

- *Question 2 (Should the University stimulate and support interdisciplinary research, teaching, and outreach?) should be put in the context of a certain tension that exists between the value of interdisciplinary research and the value of something like departmental autonomy.*
- *In addition to reviewing what programs should be eliminated, downsized, expanded, or merged, a question should be added asking "What administrative and non-academic support groups should be eliminated, downsized, expanded, or merged?"*
- *Issues related to the quality of life for employees of the University should be examined as part of the planning process.*
- *The planning effort should include looking at ways to create a sense of academic community at the University--one in which everyone works together for the furtherance of the same aims and objectives.*
- *The first question (What programs are necessary if we are to be a quality*

University?) should be restructured to ask what ought to be the program areas of greatest distinction and how do we make them so.

- An important component of the planning process should be its outreach and service activities.
- Consideration should be given to what it would take to recruit, retain, reward, and motivate a quality faculty. In connection with this, a long-range compensation policy should be developed.
- Under the heading "Whom we serve," the following question should be added: "As the only land grant institution in the State, what should the University be?" The words land grant speak to what is unique about the University of Minnesota and ought to be discussed as part of the strategic planning process.

One person asked how the current planning process ties in with previous planning efforts. Is the University "focusing," or is it the intention of the Steering Committee to offer programs in such areas as polytech, which would mean a change in the direction of previous planning efforts? Professor Adams responded that the inclusion of polytech in the list of planning issues was due in large part to environmental pressures and that the Steering Committee believed the question warranted reassessment. It may be that the University will decide to reaffirm its prior position in this area. Professor Scott added that several major task forces are addressing important issues such as the undergraduate initiative, outreach, and community building, and it will be the task of the Steering Committee to help integrate the endeavors of those task forces into the overall planning efforts.

Another Senator asked the Steering Committee what it intends to do with the list of questions it has developed. Professor Adams said it is the goal of the Steering Committee to structure the planning process in such a way that it results in significant decisions. It is not realistic to think that all the questions will be answered or that all the issues will be resolved, but some critical decisions will be made during the next 18 months.

One person suggested that with a clearer mission statement many of the issues outlined in the Status Report would no longer be issues. The Board of Regents, Professor Adams said, has expressed an interest in reviewing the mission of the University and it is possible that the answers to some of the planning questions will be reflected in a revised University mission statement.

One individual suggested the planning process begin by first asking some broader questions, such as: 1) Should the University be a major research university? 2) If so, what should such a university look like ten years from now? 3) Would there be resources to accomplish that goal and what would be the sources of those revenues? and 4) Are the citizens of Minnesota committed to supporting such an institution when they know what the costs will be to them?

What process will be used in making decisions to eliminate, downsize, merge, or expand programs, queried one senator? What will be the criteria used and who will decide the criteria? Will academic freedom be at risk in the process?

A number of senators expressed strong objection with the June 15, deadline for the submission of comments and questions and urged changing the date to sometime in the fall. The short timeframe does not allow for adequate consultation within units and among colleagues, they argued. The Steering Committee responded that June 15, was not intended to be a firm deadline but rather an inducement to faculty to submit comments early in the planning process. It will be difficult to give the same consideration to recommendations submitted late in the process than to those submitted early. There is also some immediacy, Professor Scott added, for the University to make decisions in certain areas, such as its role in providing baccalaureate education in the Twin Cities.

Senators also urged the Planning Steering Committee to establish appropriate consulting mechanisms to ensure faculty input into the decision-making process. Consultation, one person said, should include asking faculty what they want.

Concern was also expressed with the composition of the Steering Committee--three faculty members and five administrators. Do the faculty really have a voice? Professor Rubenstein responded that the Steering Committee is responsible for putting in place the mechanisms that will allow the University to make long-term strategic planning decisions. It is the Board of Regents, not the Steering Committee, who will ultimately make the decisions after appropriate consultation.

A member of the Senate Finance and Planning Committee reminded senators that the Finance and Planning Committee as well as a number of other Senate committees have been involved in the planning process all year. The current planning effort is part of a long-term process that is connected to the last major planning effort, Commitment to Focus, and to collegiate and departmental planning efforts as well. Input from all parties will continue through normal consulting channels, such as the governance system, and in individual units.

II. OLD BUSINESS

NONE

III. NEW BUSINESS

Item 1 After a motion to suspend the rules to consider an item of business not on the printed agenda was approved, senators discussed possible mechanisms for broadening faculty consultation in the strategic planning process. Several options were considered, including 1) electing a senator from each vice presidential cluster to serve on the Planning Steering Committee, and 2) scheduling planning meetings to include senators within each vice presidential cluster and the Planning Steering Committee. No action was taken, however, because a quorum was not present. [The parliamentarian ruled that the call for a quorum applied only to Item 1.]

Item 2 A second item of new business relating to the June 15, deadline for providing input into the strategic planning process was not discussed because the motion to suspend the rules to consider it was not approved. In regard to this matter, the Steering Committee reminded senators that the process will be a continuing one and they urged faculty input. In order to give appropriate consideration to everyone's comments and concerns, however, faculty were strongly encouraged to submit issues early in the planning process.

Item 3 A motion to suspend the rules to consider the following motion was approved.

FACULTY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE University of Minnesota Health Care Benefits Action

MOTION:

That the Faculty Senate approve the following resolution:

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, negotiations between State management and the labor unions representing State employees over the health care options offered to State employees are currently proceeding; and,

WHEREAS, University employees and State employees have identical health benefits; and,

WHEREAS, the recent proposal from State management contains major reductions in health benefits for those employees currently enrolled in the Medica Choice Select option or in the State Health Plan option; and,

WHEREAS, the proposal from the State management contains significant increases in employee contributions for all employees, particularly those enrolled in the Group Health option;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Faculty Senate strongly urges the University administration to exert

its influence with State management to minimize the impact on University employees.

CARL ADAMS, Chair
Faculty Affairs Committee

DISCUSSION:

Professor Richard McGehee, chair of the Senate Committee on Faculty Affairs Health Care Subcommittee, presented the Resolution. The health benefits provided to employees at the University of Minnesota, Professor McGehee said, are determined by the State of Minnesota through a process of collective bargaining. Negotiations are currently underway and, at this time, the State management has proposed two major changes in health benefits: 1) an across-the-board increase in employee contribution and 2) the replacement of Medica Choice Select with a new product called Medica Premier. Medica Premier, unlike Medica Choice Select, would have a gatekeeper, a referral network, and no out-of-network coverage. The gatekeeper concept sounds simply like good medical practice, Professor McGehee said, until one investigates the details of how it works. There is a contract between the primary care clinic and the insurance company which typically provides financial disincentives for the primary care physician to make referrals to specialists. These contracts are notoriously difficult to uncover, he said, and they certainly won't appear in the materials distributed to employees during open enrollment.

The intention of the Resolution, Professor McGehee told senators, is to capture the attention of the Administration and urge them to exert their influence with the State management to minimize the impact on University employees.

One individual expressed outrage that none of the options would include out-of-network coverage and urged the Faculty Senate to convey to the Administration the unacceptability of this.

Without further discussion, the Resolution was overwhelmingly approved.

APPROVED

IV. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

**Martha Kvanbeck
Abstractor**