

Minutes*

Senate Committee on Educational Policy
Wednesday, September 19, 2012
2:00 – 4:00
238A Morrill Hall

- Present: Alon McCormick (chair), Thomas Brothen Lee-Ann Breuch, Megan Chock, Emily Combs, Robert McMaster, Nic McPhee, Thomas Michaels, Kristen Nelson, Jane Phillips, Leslie Schiff, Henning Schroeder, Elaine Tarone, Cathrine Wambach, Susan Wick
- Absent: Barbara Brandt, John Cwodzinski
- Guests: Professor Kathleen Conklin (Genetics, Cell Biology and Development), Professor Nita Krevans (Graduate School policy review committee); John Kellogg (Office of Institutional Research); Professors Shawn Curley and Steven Yussen (Committee on Committees)
- Other: Tina Falkner, Susan VanVoorhis (Academic Support Resources), Suzanne Bardouche (Office of Undergraduate Education)

[In these minutes: (1) committee business; (2) advisers and preliminary oral examination committees; (3) grade inflation/compression; (4) definition of a credit hour; (5) Committee on Committees review]

1. Committee Business

Professor McCormick convened the meeting at 2:00 and noted that the agenda was packed; the items on it raise important questions that will probably not be resolved at this meeting but which will require that the Committee decide on how to deal with them.

Professor McCormick thanked Professor Nelson for agreeing to serve as the Committee's representative on the Public Engagement Council.

2. Advisers and Preliminary Oral Examination Committees

Professor McCormick next welcomed Professors Kathleen Conklin and Nita Krevans to the meeting to discuss an issue that has arisen because of one of the new graduate-education policies.

Vice Provost Henning Schroeder recalled that the ad hoc committee to review graduate-education policies chaired by Professor Krevans had prepared a number of new policies over the last two years; the policy drafts were seen by many people before they were approved by this Committee and the Faculty Senate. Now that the policies are in effect, one case has arisen where the existing rules seem to be in conflict with the practices "on the ground" in some departments.

* 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.

In the case of the policy *Doctoral Degree: Performance Standards and Progress*, the language provides (section 4(c)) that

The doctoral preliminary oral committee must consist of at least four members, including the advisor/s. All members of the committee and the candidate must participate in the preliminary oral examination. Committee members and/or the student may participate remotely as long as all conditions for remote participation in the examination are met.

[<http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/DOCTORALPERFORMANCE.html>]

There are a number of programs where the long-standing practice is that advisers are NOT part of the oral examination committee. These departments are doing well and highly ranked, so either the Committee must interpret what "participate" means or it must revise the policy.

Professor Conklin reported that she is from one of the three graduate programs MCDB&G [Molecular Cellular, Developmental Biology and Genetics], BMBB [Biochemistry, Molecular Biology and Biophysics] and MICaB [Microbiology, Immunology and Cancer Biology] that have the policy that the adviser does not serve on the preliminary oral examining committee. BMBB and MCDB&G are jointly administered by the Medical School and CBS; MICaB is a Medical School program. The adviser does not, of course, have a vote, either. In the case of BMBB, the adviser is not present at the examination. In the case of MICaB, the adviser's presence is optional, based on student-adviser agreement, but if present may not speak except to answer questions, and may participate in the discussion after the student leaves. In the case of MCDB&G, the adviser is present but may not speak except to answer questions

Professor Conklin apologized that all three programs missed this point when the policies were being developed. Apparently all three programs have been in violation of University rules for a long time. Assistant Dean Shimizu of the Medical School emailed colleagues at peer institutions and learned that the practice of the three departments is common in the biomedical sciences: The adviser is not on the preliminary oral examining committee.

The question about the language of section 4(c) as written is whether the departments can maintain their current practice. If the adviser must be a member of the committee, does that mean he or she must be a voting member? Or could the adviser be non-voting? Can a program, with the college, define "participate"? She also asked about the implications of two of the FAQs, which indicate the adviser must be on the committee and that committee members cannot abstain from voting.

Professor Krevans said that the policy provision in question was also taken to the Graduate Education Council, which took a position similar to that of her committee. The procedures are up to the program, and programs could request a waiver from the provision that the adviser must vote. Her committee did NOT agree with the position that the adviser should not be a member of the preliminary oral examining committee. The adviser is not just there to be in the committee; the adviser is the supervisor of the student's transition from preparatory work to dissertation research, and her committee believed that the adviser needs to be present to ensure proper continuity in advising. Programs who exclude the adviser did raise a number of concerns. There could be a conflict of interest because of the time and money the adviser may have put into the student, but that is one reason for the

requirement that there be a committee member from outside the program. If there is a powerful faculty member that others do not feel they can vote against, her committee believed the adviser should be there to witness the student's performance if anything goes wrong. So the compromise position is that the policy does not define "participation" and the FAQs can be changed. Professor Krevans said her committee is prepared to allow programs to continue to prohibit the adviser from participating or voting but it believes the adviser must be present. Some believe the student may be nervous if the adviser is present but they believe that it is in the interest of programs and students to have advisers present.

Professor Conklin said that some believe the adviser could answer questions that arise during the exam, so should be available by telephone or Skype—but not in the room. That would be another form of participation. Professor Krevans said her committee would find remote participation acceptable, but the adviser must be involved in the examination. She noted that the policy now allows remote participation by a committee member.

Professor Nelson suggested that the FAQ change should be fairly extensive to explain what "participation" can mean. Professor McCormick added that the rule should be at the program level and not vary with the individual student.

Professor Tarone asked what the rationale is for excluding the adviser. Professor Conklin said it varies. But a major point is that the adviser's career is invested in the student and there is a concern that the adviser will be unnaturally positive about passing students along even if their work is marginal, because failing a student means a great deal of lost time and money. The programs believe that students should be able to stand on their own feet in the preliminary oral examination. The programs she is familiar with have different views on whether the adviser should be present to observe the exam, even if he or she does not participate. Professor Krevans commented that there is a long history in biomedical fields of excluding the adviser and that there are other programs with similar rules, even though the issue of money is not involved.

Professor Krevans suggested that she and Professor Conklin redraft the FAQs, in consultation with Dr. Falkner; Professor McCormick concurred and said the Committee should be informed about the result of that effort.

Vice Provost Schroeder said he was impressed by how constructively the problem was dealt with. He pointed out that the policies are not designed to punish programs; if something is wrong or not in compliance, the responsible parties need to figure out the underlying reasons and a way to fix it.

3. Grade Inflation/Compression

Professor McCormick turned to the topic of grade inflation and recalled that the Faculty Consultative Committee (FCC) last fall gave this Committee (SCEP) a charge to address grade inflation/compression. The Committee had several discussions last year and also received a proposal from FCC to change how grade information was presented on students' transcripts. There was open discussion at the Faculty Senate last spring and some members of the Committee worked on this topic over the summer. He provided a written summary of the events (between the * * *):

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Though SCEP does not meet in the summer, a subgroup of SCEP members has been proceeding this summer on discussion and research so that SCEP can better understand and address the issue in the Fall. No official SCEP discussion is scheduled until September, when all of the members can participate. The summer discussions were only to discover and process information to bring to SCEP in September.

Our summer discussion focused on the proposal (given to SCEP by the FCC on November 16, 2011) that transcripts be modified to show grade percentiles with each grade.

We have separated two questions:

a) How to furnish individual students* with context, so they can better understand the meaning of their grades, *{and perhaps larger groups, including: i) administration/faculty/advisors, ii) students as a whole, iii) other transcript readers [e.g., prospective employers, grad programs, or fellowship programs]}

and

b) How to promote faculty awareness about grade compression, stimulating faculty discussion -- within degree programs, departments and colleges -- about their interpretation of the University definition of grades.

The context for these questions has changed over the summer as we became more aware that since 2003, the Office of Institutional Research has been providing grade distribution data at the class and section level each year to the website now known as "myedu.com." This means that grade distribution data is already available to our students and, more broadly, really to anyone with a myedu.com account. Moreover, we learned that at least one of our peer institutions (UW-Madison) makes its grade distribution publicly available each semester at its Registrar website.

In light of this existing practice of releasing data, we have been exploring the feasibility of three approaches:

1) The approach proposed in November 2011 by FCC - to **add grade distribution data directly to the transcript**. The Registrar's office notes this approach would be difficult and expensive, at least until the next PeopleSoft upgrade is implemented.

In addition, we are discussing two other approaches that would be low-cost and that might have broader effects:

2) Emulating UW-Madison's approach - to **provide grade distribution data online**. We have been exploring the merits and drawbacks of posting this data (already being released to myedu.com) available on a reliable University website. This would involve little cost, and (since UMN has released grade distribution data to myedu.com since 2003) would not set a new precedent in release of information. Action 2 could be tailored to be of different levels of assistance to the various groups of "transcript consumers", listed as i-iii above. The level of

access might be made different for these different audiences. Indeed, for internal faculty use at least, we go further:

3) Asking the administration (OIR) to provide **data-analysis tools that will assist administration/faculty/advisors** to perceive and analyze patterns in grades across discipline, grade levels, instructor, and time. With the help of John Kellogg and Andrea Galliger of OIR, we began to see how spreadsheets and interactive analysis tools could be used to discern trends (in %A, average grade, %W, D, F, etc.) through time, across program, and across course level, as well as to spot outliers from the general trends (e.g., which programs/levels/courses show the most difference from the mean). SCEP can catalyze this discussion by asking guiding questions of the undergraduate programs (through Vice Provost McMaster, to Undergraduate Deans, and in turn to Department Heads/Directors of Undergraduate Studies) and requesting that they provide feedback to SCEP.

Such questions might include:

"In the programs within your area:

What does an "A" mean (i.e., how is the University definition** interpreted)?

What are the grading practices? How do these vary with course level or type of course? Do they vary with courses designed for majors and courses designed for a more general student population?

In what ways is grading consistent across all sections of a course (e.g., multiple sections that have a common final)?

How have changes in the preparation of incoming students affected grade distributions in your programs?

Have these practices changed in the last decade?

How have the faculty of your program engaged in a discussion of these topics?"

**Represents achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements.

* * *

FCC has asked for a recommendation, Professor McCormick related. The first challenge is to provide a response to the proposal the Committee received last year. As they have looked at what other institutions do, they came to realize that the University is quite open about providing grade distributions, and it could be that it should provide information about the context for grades. He invited discussion about a recommendation to FCC to be made in a timely manner.

Professor Schiff said it would help to identify the goals, stated or not, in suggesting that transcripts be changed to provide a context for grades. Professor McCormick said it was in the original request: An interpretation for the student and others who look at a transcript, a provision of

contextual information. There are three audiences: the student, others who need an interpretation, and faculty members (who understand what grading practices are). Professor McCormick also noted the 1999 study of grades by this Committee, which recommended regular reporting of grade distributions to the Faculty Senate and administration and that faculty members in each unit discuss definitions of grades.

Ms. Phillips inquired if any transcript change could be made before the PeopleSoft upgrade. If not, this is not the right time for the discussion. Ms. VanVoorhis said they would not be able to use the PeopleSoft transcript; they would have to write a separate program and link to it from PeopleSoft. They would also have to eliminate the outside vendor and eliminate electronic transcripts.

Professor Schiff commented that what has come out of the discussions is that this is about changing faculty behavior. The group that met in the summer agreed that is probably a good goal—but that changing the transcript is not the way to achieve it. The faculty are not looking at transcripts; they assign grades and may look at those of their own advisees. She said she did not disagree with aim of making the faculty and colleges think about their grading practices, but that should be separate from the goal of providing more information on transcripts. There are other ways to provide information to the various audiences.

Professor Wick reported a conversation with a colleague who teaches primarily upper division courses; that person thought he was supposed to aim for an average class grade of 2.7. Professor Wick said she had no idea where that notion came from.

One issue that has come up is the difference in average grades across colleges, which have existed for a very long time, Professor Wambach said. Scientists tend to give fewer high grades than faculty members in the humanities, so there are disciplinary traditions. And even within departments there are differences among individuals—some give more As, some give fewer. So there are two different conversations needed: One, about differences across disciplines; two, about differences within departments. On the first, how would the conversations be held? On the second, it is reasonable to expect consistency within a department. She concluded that she could envision the possibility of holding both conversations but said that they would be very different.

Professor Schiff agreed that it is important that the Committee respect disciplinary differences. There will not be a University-wide agreement on an appropriate distribution of grades. But internal discussions within departments are very important.

Ms. Combs said that there was also a concern, with grade compression, that students would flee courses with lower grade distributions. But they have learned that grade distributions are already available to students online, at myedu.com, so it appears that additional information about grade compression will not change student behavior regarding enrolling in courses.

Professor Michaels asked if there is evidence that there is a problem with grade compression. How are faculty looking at this, he asked? What standards are they using? Is there any evidence? Professor Schiff said the implication in the FCC request is that there is grade compression; that is it. There is also the implication that perhaps there are tools that deans and department heads can be provided with to deal with the problem, Professor McCormick added. Professor Wick recalled that

when she was on this Committee in the early 1990s, there was concern that instructors were giving high grades in order to receive better student evaluations.

Ms. Phillips recalled that former Committee member Professor Root had pointed out that a number of courses have competence levels that students must achieve—so they cannot pass unless they earn an A. If accrediting groups require that such courses not be S/N, the performance bar in the courses must be set high.

Professor Brothen noted that the Faculty Senate receives the grading data each year. Members of the Senate look at it, and then nothing. Last year, Professor Cramer made the grade distributions a cause celebre and pointed out differences. Some departments award very high grades, some award lower grades, and some took from the discussion the implication that something is wrong. One senator observed that none of the faculty took a seminar on grading.

Professor Nelson said she would like the Committee to talk about the goal when it responds to FCC. Is it an evaluation of whether grading practices are consistent? If they are informative (to whom?)? Where is the University vis-à-vis peers on grade compression? What is it that FCC would like to see changed? The Committee has not received a lot of "why" in response to the data and the need for change. She said she is concerned that the Committee could collect a lot of data without a clear goal in mind. She said the conversations in departments are important but it is not clear what beyond that would help.

Professor McCormick read from the 1999 report:

Each college, department and program should discuss what the standards of the Uniform Grading Policy mean for its courses and programs, and what expectations the faculty have of students in their field of knowledge in order to achieve those standards. The Subcommittee believes that having such discussions would be a service especially for new faculty.

So it is déjà vu, Professor Schiff commented. The Committee could ask the associate deans to report back; the Committee has never heard what happened. Learning about the discussions would be helpful but falls far short of changing transcripts.

Ms. Phillips commented that Minnesota is not different from its peers; other universities have had grade compression for years. Minnesota cannot solve the problem alone.

Vice Provost McMaster said that from his standpoint, there are two solutions. One, an active solution—is it warranted? Two, posting grades on a website—is that enough? Is it worth the large amount of time and money that would be required to migrate to a different transcript system in order to provide contextual information? It is an intriguing idea but it may not be worth what it would cost. Ms. VanVoorhis commented that her office can post links on the web so that those who are interested could find the contextual data.

Vice Provost McMaster, in response to the proposal to ask the associate deans for information, inquired what it is he would be expected to ask them. One point is to make the data more readily available to them, Professor McCormick said. Mr. Kellogg reported that they do have a report available, an enhanced version that is more robust than the ones that have been available in the past.

In terms of why anyone cares about this, Professor Wick said, if students intend to go on to a professional career, there are additional metrics that are used to determine admission to advanced education (e.g., test scores). If a student is going into business, most of the time the employer doesn't care about the GPA, only that the person has the degree. Internally, faculty members know how to interpret transcripts. She said that people may be worried about a problem that does not exist.

Professor Nelson said that one compelling piece is the argument that students who go up for scholarships or awards based on GPA would be better served if the information were available so that they could show they were in the top X percent.

Professor Breuch agreed that the information should be more available but suggested the Committee should decline to support the recommendation from FCC about changing the transcript. Dr. Falkner repeated Ms. VanVoorhis's point: They can add a link from the transcript to the data, and it will be easy to make the data public rather than requiring an X.500 ID. Professor Schiff said it would be better to send students to the University's data than to myedu.com because the University is in control of its data and they may be more complete and accurate.

In response to a question about the next step from Professor McCormick, Professor Wambach moved that the Committee affirm the 1999 statement requesting that departments have discussions about grading and that the Committee also ask the associate deans to facilitate the discussions by sending questions to departments and faculty members and asking them to report the result of the conversations. Professor McCormick said the Committee will need to fine-tune the questions it wishes to pose and that this would apply only to undergraduate grades. Dr. McMaster said this approach made sense to him but said that if questions are going to departments, the Committee will need to be parsimonious in assembling them because departments are already burdened with a lot of questions from their colleges and central administration that take a lot of time, so the Committee should not construct a long list of questions unless they believe they are all important. And it should be crystal clear they are intended to be constructive. And should catalyze discussions, Professor McCormick added.

In terms of reporting to the Committee, Dr. Falkner suggested, it may not be written reports but instead oral summaries from the associate deans. The Committee probably does not want written reports from every department. Professor McCormick agreed that Vice Provost McMaster should receive reports from the associate deans and report a sense of them to the Committee; it does not want a level of granularity it cannot absorb. Ms. Phillips suggested using pilot departments to see if the process works; Professor McCormick agreed.

Professor Schiff said the Committee wants to be responsive to FCC, and had a fix in 1999, but there were no prompts for the recommended discussions, which can now be pursued. But a transcript change, she repeated, is not the fix.

Professor McCormick suggested that Professors Wambach and Wick collaborate in writing a resolution for the Committee and perhaps also prepare one concerning making known the fact that grade distributions are already public. And what should be released, Dr. McMaster added.

4. Definition of a Credit Hour

Professor McCormick next recalled that Provost Hanson asked the Committee to give guidance to the administration on how to express faculty effort, which historically has come down to the credit hour. The question is how the concept of a credit hour works with different modes of instruction. The Committee needs a plan and timeline to deal with the question.

Ms. Bardouche noted for the Committee that there are two policies related to the question, Instructional Time per Course Credit and Expected Student Academic Work per Credit (which can be found at <http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/INSTRUCTIONALTIME.html> and <http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/STUDENTWORK.html>). She and Dr. Falkner have suggested a few edits to the former policy in order make it clear that the policy explicitly applies to online courses (which it does not as presently worded). Professor Brothen observed that the two policy statements deal with two different matters, expected student academic work and expected instructor time. Ms. Bardouche agreed but said that they do not offer separate definitions of a credit hour. Professor Wick said that the federal definition—provided to the Committee—includes both instructors and students.

The federal definition is this:

<http://www2.ed.gov/policy/highered/reg/hearulemaking/2009/credit.html>

§ 600.2 Definitions.

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Credit hour: Except as provided in 34 CFR 668.8(k) and (l), a credit hour is an amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that is an institutionally established equivalency that reasonably approximates not less than—(1) One hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out of class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester or trimester hour of credit, or ten to twelve weeks for one quarter hour of credit, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time; or (2) At least an equivalent amount of work as required in paragraph (1) of this definition for other academic activities as established by the institution including laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours.

The two policies are not inconsistent; should they be combined, Ms. Bardouche asked?

Vice Provost McMaster said that Provost Hanson's request is about how these definitions will work as the delivery of education evolves. Do they apply to a 3-credit online course and a 3-credit hybrid course as well as to a traditional on-campus course? What does a credit hour mean for online courses? Ms. VanVoorhis cautioned that the University must be mindful of the federal definition if it thinks about defining a credit hour differently (especially if the University is considering defining the credit hour differently for online versus in-person classes). The suggested revisions to the policy on instructional time per course credit say that courses in class and online are the same on the transcript—and if they are different, that must be noted.

What is one hour of online instruction, Dr. McMaster inquired? Ms. VanVoorhis said the proposed policy changes mean it is the same as in a course on campus. It must meet the same standards of delivering instructional content, Ms. Bardouche added.

Professor Wambach asked if the federal regulations distinguish between instruction and homework. They do not, Ms. Bardouche reported; they are asking that they say the same thing. Professor Wambach commented that four hours of lecture and four hours of research activities online are not the same thing.

Professor Breuch said the Committee also needs to think about synchronous versus asynchronous courses and the need for a definition for the latter. There could be a number of activities that meet the standard.

One problem with thinking in terms of hours, Professor Michaels said, is that courses are sometimes online so that students with different learning styles can take them and spend whatever time they need to complete the lessons. It isn't appropriate to count hours. Professor Breuch said that it is in asynchronous classes. Professor Michaels said it is easier to assign hours for online courses when they are developed from existing conventional lecture courses.

Professor Tarone said credit hours seemed to be defined either in terms of time spent by the instructors, or time spent by the students, and that these could be quite different. It is clear that instructors spend more time teaching online courses than they do teaching traditional courses. But it's not clear whether students spend more time learning in online courses than they do in face-to-face classrooms. In a face-to-face classroom, the student can't speed up a lecture or jump around on the course web site; on the other hand, they may not be paying attention. One can measure their seat time in face-to-face classrooms and not in online classes. But seat time is not a good measure of learning any more than is hours spent by the student at the online site. Professor Breuch agreed that online courses are not equivalent to seat time; there need to be suggestions about activities when co-presence occurs. The question is what the University wants represented.

Professor Brothen said that the student credit hour and instructional hour are administrative conveniences that bear only a tenuous relationship to reality. They are a way to keep track of people. The federal government has established a definition that includes language about "intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that is an institutionally established equivalency that reasonably approximates." The Committee's task is to satisfy the federal definition and figure out what "reasonably approximates" entails. Dr. McMaster asked Professor Brothen what his expectations for an online course are. Professor Brothen said it is student learning; students can ignore online lectures but they can sleep through them in class as well. He provides lectures in his online course but there are other ways to transmit such information that don't replicate seat time exactly.

Dr. Falkner said much is based on the federal regulations. There is a policy and FAQs; there is no seat time requirement (from the federal language):

CH-Q4: How would an institution apply the definition of a credit hour if the institution offers asynchronous online courses that are not also offered in a classroom setting?

CH-A4: There is no "seat time" requirement implicit in the definition of a credit hour. An institution that is offering asynchronous online courses would need to determine the amount of student work expected in each online course in order to achieve the course objectives, and to assign a credit hour based on at least an equivalent amount of work as represented in the definition of credit hour. [Guidance issued 3/18/2011]

Professor Breuch said that regulations call for two hours of student work in addition to one hour in class. Three hours of work for one credit is reasonable. For online courses, that may be a lot of time reading and the other is time spent on exams and writing. In a study they did, their courses are easily meeting the standard of three hours of work per credit. The on-line courses are more difficult for faculty because their times of contact with students in the class are distributed widely. Professor Wick said that one must keep in mind online chat, which is a big part of some courses. That point came up with the Council on Liberal Education as an argument for a group experience, Dr. McMaster reported, and the Council concurred with Professor Wick's observation.

Professor Wambach said she knows there is a concern about faculty effort, but hours in class are a way to figure out the amount of time faculty should teach. She said the Committee is struggling with what the equivalent is for faculty members teaching an online course. She said she disagreed about the amount of work a student must do; a course could demand more and students need to be protected from demands that are unreasonable. Courses for graduate students have carte blanche to assign work but for undergraduate courses the institution decided there should be constraints (and not 60 hours of work per week for a course). Professor Nelson agreed. She said she sees students taking 18-20 credits and it is important to keep the workload to three hours of work per week per credit.

Ms. Phillips said she believes the current policy meets the federal regulations. She added that she did not see how the policy on faculty effort is an educational policy within the purview of this Committee; it is more appropriately a question for the Senate Committee on Faculty Affairs. The two policies mix up things that they should not; this Committee should look at the undergraduate workload. Vice Provost McMaster said he thought they were both appropriately educational policy matters; Ms. Phillips demurred. Professor McCormick said that faculty work could be an educational policy because of the changing modes of teaching.

Professor Breuch said the Committee must be aware of the tendency to let dollars drive what is done. Faculty members may want to add a credit to a course to increase the tuition revenue attributed for the course.

The Committee agreed it wished to have more discussion of the issue but would aim to get any policy changes on the docket of the December 6 Faculty Senate meeting.

5. Committee on Committees Review

Professor McCormick now welcomed Professors Curley and Yussen to the meeting to talk about the charge and functioning of the Committee.

Professor Yussen explained that the Committee on Committees has begun a regular review process for Senate committees to learn how they are functioning and if the charge and composition of the committee are appropriate. Committee members offered comments.

- At present the biological sciences are over-represented on the Committee.
- The ex officio representation is good and the administrators have used the Committee as a sounding board. Academic Support Resources should perhaps have an ex officio representative.
- There is no one from global programs and there should be a voting representative from that office.
- There are a number of groups dealing with learning and e-education so there is always the question about where issues should be discussed in a very decentralized organization. The Committee has just discussed defining a credit hour and how it affects faculty workload, which could be an issue for the Senate Committee on Faculty Affairs.
- There are a number of areas where a joint effort is needed (e.g., with the Faculty Consultative Committee).

Professors Curley and Yussen invited Committee members to contact them with any additional opinions they wished to offer. Their draft report will be shared with the Committee for comments and then provided to FCC and the Faculty Senate (for information).

Professor McCormick thanked Professors Curley and Yussen and adjourned the meeting at 4:00.

-- Gary Engstrand

University of Minnesota