

CLASSROOM ADVISORY SUBCOMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING

November 27, 2012

[In these minutes: the role of Facilities Management discussion; the relationship of SCEP and CAS; old business.]

[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 represent the views of, nor are they binding on, the Senate, the Administration or the Board of Regents.]

PRESENT: Patricia Schaber (Chair), Barbara Jensen, Peggy McCarthy, Kevin Smith, Christine Swartwout

GUEST: Alon McCormick, chair, SCEP

OTHERS: David Crane for Jeremy Todd, Thomas Michaels form SCEP

REGRETS: Brad Cohen, Roberta Juarez, Jeff Lindgren, Errin McIsaac, Jeremy Todd

ABSENT: William Garrard, Aisha Ahmed, Nathaniel Anderson, Keya Ganguly, Katherine Kroph

WELCOME

Professor Schaber welcomed committee members and called for introductions.

THE ROLE OF FACILITIES MANAGEMENT – Peggy McCarthy, assistant district director, Facilities Management

Ms. McCarthy distributed a handout that included an organizational chart for University Services and another for Facilities Management. Pamela Wheelock, vice president, University Services, oversees all of the units throughout the University that provide service to the University. The five main units are: University Health and Safety, Public Safety, Facilities Management, Capital Planning and Project Management, and Auxiliary Services.

Five years ago Facilities Management (FM) went through a transformation. Mike Berthelsen, associate vice president, FM, implemented a three-year transformation in which everyone rebid for his or her job and he planned to replace up to 50% of the department. He wanted to broaden the perspective of building maintenance as a contribution to the success of the University community. Ms. McCarthy believes that this transformation is working and it is now five and a half years since the process began.

Ms. McCarthy provided a list of contacts and emphasized calling the number 624-2900 for issues related to buildings and building systems. In the OCM classrooms, a contact number should be listed, but OCM and FM will help direct phone calls to the correct entity.

Facilities Management is broken into three operating districts: East Bank, Health Sciences, and St. Paul-West Bank. Central Services and Energy Management are part of the FM group. Central Services provide services to all the districts and subgroups include: Safety and Risk Management, Landcare, and Waste Services. Ms. McCarthy explained characteristics of the FM districts:

- They maintain 26 million square feet, containing over 300 buildings.
- Between 60 and 80 mechanics focus on maintenance in each district.
- Each district has 100-120 tradespeople that include: plumbers, electricians, and pipe fitters.
- Districts split up the buildings that they are responsible for and assign them to team managers. They manage crews of approximately 20 people to cover 1 million square feet and more. The team managers are contacted for the day-to-day responsibilities and have between 11 and 13 buildings that are divided among their crew and keep the buildings in operating order.
- One to two custodial supervisors.

Ms. McCarthy responded to a question regarding the role of FM in building renovations. She explained that it depends on the size of the project and listed possible means of completion:

- Capital Planning and Project Management – is a large construction group and they are currently working on the new Nano-Technology building, Northrop renovations, and similar large-scale projects.
- There is a small construction group within FM and they complete smaller projects in all of the districts. They also provide support with tradespeople.
- FM will complete projects that require only one or two people with district staff.
- In the past, FM has combined public space funding with departments and OCM to complete details like carpeting, lighting, and painting.
- A list of East Bank large-scale projects was provided and outlined new construction and major renovations. The FM employees have varying degrees of involvement throughout the large-scale projects. For example, an FM electrician will remove a fire system while the construction continues.
- She had a lengthy list of the projects being completed by the Central Services group and offered to share it via email with any interested members. Some of the projects include: painting all public hallways in a building, upgrading public bathroom facilities with automatic fixtures, and installing matting in entryways that is absorbent and helps maintain the inside of the buildings with less work.

Professor Schaber asked for clarification regarding renovations for active learning classrooms and emphasized the need for flexibility.

- Mr. Crane responded that OCM would design the renovation. If it is a capital renovation, OCM will represent the needs listed in academic guidelines.

Construction Services is one of the many vendors that OCM can contract with, but it depends on the scope of the project.

- Ms. McCarthy commented that although there are less expensive way to make classrooms flexible for active learning, many issues arise when considering seemingly small renovations such as: the structure must be able to support weight that is not evenly distributed, air flow must be adequate if retractable walls are installed, and furniture must be kept where it is assigned but if it is moveable this is not a guarantee.

Professor Schaber asked how the departmental classrooms and general-purpose classrooms are treated differently?

- Departmental spaces are funded through different sources than the public corridors that are in front of the space. From the operations and maintenance perspective, departmental and general-purpose classrooms are treated the same because FM is responsible for the operating systems in the building. When considering renovations, carpet, paint and light fixtures the spaces are treated differently. FM is only budgeted on a primary basis to fund and maintain the general building exterior, public interior, and all mandatory systems in the building. For example, an HVAC system will be purchased, maintained, supported, and replaced by FM. If a departmental space has window air conditioners, FM will support and maintain them, but the department will replace them. The Health Sciences district is more complicated because of varying funding sources such as grants or Fairview.
- A chart was provided that listed the custodial service levels. The main difference in custodial duties between general-purpose classrooms and departmental spaces is found in what is done on a daily basis and what is done on a weekly basis. A year ago FM changed to “green team” cleaning. They lost nearly 200 employees and FM had to create a way to maintain standards with a dramatically decreased staff and budget. Ms. McCarthy stated that improvements have been made and they are continuing to implement changes.

A member asked what a department building could do to upgrade to general-purpose standards? She has experienced custodial issues in department buildings on the West Bank, specifically.

- Ms. McCarthy stated that typically, the departments have a service level agreement with FM. They are not staffed to go beyond the maroon standards and an increase in services would incur a fee increase within the service level agreement.
- Mr. Crane added that the academic spaces could be assessed to determine a value and potentially turn them over as a central resource managed by OCM. This would remove them from the department’s budget and achieve higher service levels.

Ms. McCarthy explained a campus-wide initiative began a year ago to create, upgrade, and replace elevators. This was driven by the State to align with codes and the University’s commitment to the long-term investment in the project.

- The elevator installations have been completed in the following buildings: Child Development, Lind Hall, Shevlin Hall, Johnston Hall, Peik Hall, Civil/Mineral Engineering, Shepherd Lab, University Office/Plaza, Smith Hall, Ford Hall East and West, and PWB.
- The following elevator projects are estimated to begin in 2013: Tate Physics, Elliot Hall, Nolte Center, and Sanford Hall.
- In the summer of 2013, Scott Hall will receive new elevators and the front, side, and back entrances will be rebuilt to make the building wheelchair accessible.

Professor Schaber moved on to the next agenda item and invited Professor McCormick to address the committee.

RELATIONSHIP OF THE EDUCATIONAL POLICY COMMITTEE (SCEP) AND THE CLASSROOM ADVISORY SUBCOMMITTEE – Professor Alon McCormick, chair, SCEP

Professor McCormick began by encouraging the increase of communication between SCEP and CAS. He believes liaison, Professor Thomas Michaels, will aid in this effort. Professor Michaels is currently a member of SCEP and has agreed to attend CAS meetings. Professor McCormick invited all CAS members to attend future SCEP meetings.

Professor McCormick began to outline areas in which CAS and SCEP can work together. He stated that SCEP and other University groups are concerned with the future of classrooms and what the needs will be of faculty and students involved in hybrid courses and active learning modes. He added that Professor Christopher Cramer is currently involved in developing a cohesive eLearning strategy for the University. They are considering devices that will be needed in the future and believe a wireless connection will be essential. In order for instructors and students to communicate, display devices will be needed. He noted that the emphasis is not on the most expensive options for display devices, but those that are robust, functional, and replaceable. He believes that SCEP and CAS can work to catalyze the discussions of active learning environments.

Professor McCormick noted that specific technology is still evolving and there will be a faculty committee on academic technology forming soon. The chair of this committee will be responsible for generating coherent investment opportunities in this area.

Professor McCormick contacted other professors regarding the role of classrooms and active learning in the future. The responses he received include:

- Concept content will increasingly occur online and not during the traditional class or lecture time. The classroom time will be used for problem solving, topic exploration, and interaction, which will require seating flexibility.
- Electronically capturing information on whiteboards will be expected along with opportunities for group seating.
- Some believe the instructional goals and active learning course designs will have to be developed before the classroom and technology needs are determined.

- Smaller meeting spaces for students are needed like those outside of STSS classrooms. These spaces enable students to continue discussions after class.

Professor Michaels added that the St. Paul Campus is an example of a growing need for outdoor spaces as classrooms. Wireless connectivity and interacting with the space technologically will be increasingly important.

Professor Smith noted that the flip model of courses might decrease the technology that is needed in the classroom because lectures are provided online. Professor Schaber believes that active learning needs can be met by renovating existing spaces because in hybrid or blended programs, less classroom time is needed.

Professors Schaber and McCormick suggested planning an open house for the Occupational Therapy hybrid program. She stated that she would first display the curricular design and then discuss what occurs in their departmental classroom. The members of SCEP, CAS, FCC and Professor Cramer will be invited to attend the open house.

OLD BUSINESS

Professor Schaber proposed to table the Recommendation on Funding for Faculty Development. The members agreed and noted that there are entities better suited to that endeavor.

Hearing no further business, Professor Schaber adjourned the meeting.

Jeannine Rich
University Senate Office