

FACULTY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

NEWSLETTER 62-1

March 1962

Since our last newsletter, we have met with interested faculty on the Minneapolis and Duluth campuses in open meetings as well as with the President. We should like to report to you in some detail on those proceedings. Before doing so two general comments. One, the turnout for the Minneapolis meeting was small. The discussion was lively and worthwhile but we cannot help but feel disappointment that more faculty did not turn out. We deliberately scheduled the meeting for after lunch at the Campus Club to make it as easy as possible for people to attend. This leads to comment number two. Notice that major items discussed in the faculty meeting were transmitted to the President. If, therefore, the poor attendance reflected a feeling that meetings of this kind do not matter, we hope that we can dispel it with the following account. Or can we assume almost everybody on the Minneapolis Campus is content with the way things are going?

Incidentally, the first newsletter brought in a covey of letters containing suggestions for matters to be considered by the Committee for presentation to the President. The writers will notice that the suggestions were transmitted. We appreciated the communications and hope more of you will convey ideas to us.

A. Report on Open Meeting with the Faculty of the Minneapolis Campus, December 7, 1961

1. Student-Faculty Ratio in Arts College

A faculty member from the Arts College expressed his concern over the increasing student-faculty ratio which has developed in recent years in the Arts College and expressed the view that the increase in this ratio from 13.6:1 to 17.5:1 over approximately the last decade might well be the root of the difficulties which beset the Arts College. He expressed the feeling that the Arts College has been starved and suggested that rectification of this situation might provide a better solution for the problems of the Arts College than an administrative reorganization of the University. He suggested that the FCC might be interested in looking at the situation for the University as a whole.

The Chairman explained the limited role that had been played by the FCC in relation to the consideration of the administrative reorganization of the University pointing out that since the Senate Committee on Education had been devoting nearly full time to this problem, there was no need for the FCC to play more than a limited role.

The faculty member stated that he thought it was appropriate to look at University organization but that in addition the Senate Committee on Education and the FCC ought to look at whether the real problem is the result of the failure of the faculty size to keep pace with the student enrollment.

The opinion was expressed that the situation is even more serious than it appears since account is not taken of graduate advising in the determination of faculty loads. [See Part B, Item #1 for President's comments.]

2. West Campus

A faculty member suggested that the impact of the West Campus move may have a greater effect on the Arts College than the proposed reorganization. He stressed the effect of isolation from the Main Library during the transition phase pointing out that the Humanities and Social Sciences account for seventy-five per cent of the usage of the Walter Library. He further expressed concern about the separation of the faculties of the Humanities and Social Sciences from the faculties of the Natural Sciences. Even if the Arts College were not broken up as presently proposed in one plan of reorganization this physical separation would have the same effect. Further concern was expressed regarding the two apparent alternatives; namely, loss of students or staff time in moving back and forth across the river or the separation of Arts and Humanities students from students in the natural sciences if class schedules were adopted which would avoid the movement across the river.

The question was put: How is the West Campus move reconciled with the objective of strengthening the Arts College? A member of the FCC proposed that the faculty accept the inevitability of the move to the West Campus and formulate plans for the optimum integration of these units as they become available. In answer, it was pointed out that any planning of this nature would need the encouragement and cooperation of the central administration, and that in particular the administration should define the ground rules for the move. Particular concern was expressed about the time schedule for the bridge. It was suggested that the administration should make available to the faculty a detailed explanation of its plans indicating which portions could be regarded as firm and which would be dependent on the passage of the Constitutional Amendment and on future legislative action. [See Part B, Item #2 for President's comment.]

3. Classroom Size

As an outgrowth of the discussion of the plans for the West Campus and the problem of transporting students between the campuses the unsatisfactory situation with regard to large classrooms on both campuses was discussed. It was pointed out that in many of the disciplines and in particular those in the humanities and social sciences there is a need for classrooms which will accommodate in excess of 400 students. No classrooms of this size are presently being constructed on the West Bank. An insufficient number of such classrooms are available on the East Campus and some of these are unsatisfactory, because of inadequate lighting or because they were not designed for classroom purposes. A particularly bad example is the Scott Hall Auditorium. A question was raised regarding the legitimacy of prohibiting classes in the Mayo Auditorium in view of serious needs. It was suggested that some of the large rooms in Coffman Union might be used for lecture purposes.

4. University Calendar, Academic Year 1962-1963

A number of the faculty expressed their concern that the winter quarter for the academic year 1962-1963 was so short. The FCC agreed to bring up this matter in the University Senate meeting of December 7. [Appropriate action has already been taken and the calendar has been changed to even out the quarters.]

5. Growth Problems

The FCC was queried concerning the attitude of the present administration on the problem of the University environs. Some faculty felt that previously the administration had been unwilling to exert any influence on the fate of the neighborhoods adjacent to the campus. The opinion was expressed that the administration should be urged to take positive action. In subsequent discussion the serious parking problems which will arise as the University expands were mentioned in the context of the need for improvement in the Metropolitan Transport System. The question was raised whether it would be possible for the University to press for positive action on this problem.

6. Communication

A faculty member commended the FCC on its efforts to improve communication with the faculty by such devices as open meetings and news letters. He expressed the view, however, that more use could be made of the Minnesota Daily but if this were to be done some action would be necessary to increase the financial support of the Daily. The implication was that the FCC ought to permit Daily reporters to provide news coverage of their activities. An FCC member expressed the view that communication of this kind was a responsibility of the faculty which should not be delegated to student reporters although the Daily might well be used as a vehicle for carrying the information to the faculty. A faculty member, while expressing appreciation for the avenue of communication provided by the FCC, stated that the faculty would still appreciate the opportunity to sit down once a year with the President himself in an off-the-record session in which direct questions and answers could be exchanged.

7. Statewide Education

The question was asked whether the problems of statewide education were under continuous review by any organization involving the University. Dean Morse responded saying that a continuous review is carried on by the Liaison Committee on Higher Education on which the University has membership. He suggested that the President would welcome constructive suggestions from the faculty.

8. Constitutional Amendment and Related Problems

Concern was expressed over the consequences to the University which would develop from a failure of passage of the Constitutional Amendment to raise the State debt limit. The suggestion was offered that the University

under such circumstances might be forced to seek support from private sources. It was pointed out that the University as a matter of policy had never sought broad private support but had sought and obtained support from private sources for special facilities as for example in the Medical School.

The Chairman of the FCC commented on the importance not only to the University but also to many other state institutions of the successful passage of this amendment and mentioned the FCC conversation with President Wilson on faculty participation in the efforts to obtain passage of the Amendment. He reported the President's interest in having faculty participation at an appropriate time.

9. Fringe and Retirement Benefits

The FCC was asked to communicate to the President and to the central administration the faculty's appreciation for their action on the Mill's Bill and for the recent fringe benefit improvements. The FCC was asked to explore whether the Health Service Plan now available to faculty members could be extended to cover their spouses.

The difficult situation of those who had retired in earlier years was mentioned and the FCC was urged to explore with the administration the possibility of doing something to improve their lot. The opinion was expressed by the Chairman that such a matter lay within the purview of the Senate Committee on Faculty Welfare. The FCC agreed to transmit this query to the Chairman of that Committee.

Some faculty members, while expressing appreciation for recent improvements in the University's retirement plan, pointed out that it is still in need of considerable further improvement and urged the FCC to press for still further action.

10. Reaction to Meeting

Representatives of the faculty expressed to the FCC appreciation for the opportunity provided for frank interchange in an open meeting with the FCC and urged that the practice be continued. The Chairman expressed appreciation to those present for the time spent with the FCC.

B. Report on FCC Meeting with the President, January 24, 1962

1. Student-Faculty Ratio in Arts College

The Chairman brought to the President's attention a letter from Professor Grover Stephens (Zoology) in which he transmitted statistics to buttress the remarks he had made in the Open Meeting [See Item 1 under A]. Stephens had pointed out in his remarks and letter that the Arts College has been starved and that rectification of this situation might provide a better solution to the problems of the Arts College than an administrative reorganization of the University. Professor Stephens had suggested the desirability of an evaluation of student-faculty ratios in different units of the University.

President Wilson commented on his lack of success in persuading the Legislature to take account of the different student-faculty ratios necessary in the different units of the University. This led to an inquiry concerning the progress of the Legislature's efforts to develop a comparison of the University's faculty-student ratio relative to other Big Ten Institutions. President Wilson responded that he had no information on this matter other than that resulting from the transmission to the University of Minnesota of a copy of the questionnaire returned to the legislative committee by Purdue University.

President Wilson then discussed the circumstances which had led to the rising student-faculty ratio in SLA. The student population in SLA rose in a period when that of the University as a whole remained static. While this would warrant shifts in support, an adjustment downward in other units to accommodate to such population changes is frequently not easily accomplished, in part because of certain inflexibilities concomitant with tenure or because changing needs such as an increase in graduate instruction and research prevent adjustments. He went on to point out that the Administration cannot ignore the staff needs for research activities and the University of Minnesota budgets sixty percent of the overhead developed from this activity and that the IT generates most of this overhead. President Wilson emphasized that an improvement of the position of SLA had a high priority in his thinking.

2. Relevance of Tuition Increase to Improving Student-Faculty Ratio in Arts College

The President elaborated on what he meant by saying that improvement of the position of SLA had a high priority in his thinking. He pointed out that tuition increases had been made necessary by the unfunded increases in enrollment. The University usually has a pool of unfilled positions which are vacant during the period while a suitable candidate is being sought. The vacancies result from retirements, unexpected resignations, etc. While the positions remain unfilled, the funds for the staff items revert and have been used to supplement inadequate supply budgets. In a situation such as that faced by the University in the present academic year when the Legislative appropriation is insufficient to meet a sharply increased enrollment, it has been necessary to use the funds from unfilled items to staff additional classes in standard offerings. Since these needs will continue, no means are available to provide the special competence at which the unfilled items were aimed.

By way of illustration, the President pointed out what happened in the case of a full professor leaving the English Department to take a position elsewhere. His salary was not used, as in the past. Instead his salary was used to employ two new instructors. Since the instructors will continue to be needed, there is no longer money available with which to attract an appointment of a professor of the stature of the man lost.

President Wilson expressed the hope that the funds resulting from the tuition increases would, at a minimum, make it possible to bring the Arts College and more generally the University as a whole back to the same status as it had prior to the enrollment increases.

The President was asked what the effect of tuition increases at this time might be on the attitude of the next Legislature on further increases. President Wilson expressed the hope that the University's proposed action might provide a more sympathetic climate in the next Legislature that would forestall the necessity of further increases. Also, he had pointed out earlier in the meeting that there was virtue in combining tuition and the incidental fee in a total charge for most in-state students at \$100. He felt that \$100 was a number which can be defended in the Legislature on the basis of its validity and against pressures for further increase.

The President was asked about the possibility of setting tuition charges on the basis of a given proportion of the costs. He indicated that the Legislature might be sympathetic to such an approach but pointed out some of the problems of determining actual costs. President Wilson agreed and expressed the hope that the availability of improved computation facilities would provide better information. He went on to a further discussion of the ramifications of relating tuition to actual costs. There is a wide disparity in the per student costs in the several units of the University. One extreme is the case of the Medical School where the proportional tuition costs might make it necessary to set fees for a medical student at \$1200 a year. Fees set at such a level would unfavorably affect the supply of M.D.'s. Society's needs in this case clearly demand a more substantial subvention of educational costs than in some other cases. Another example of a unit where proportioned costs would not be practical is Social Work. High tuition would discourage students from entering a field of work which is important to society but poorly rewarded. President Wilson indicated that the whole problem of premium tuition was in the discussion stage.

3. West Campus

The FCC asked two questions which arose from the open meeting with the Minneapolis faculty. One was aimed at clarifying the firmness of decisions about the specific units to move to the West Campus. Specifically it was asked if the General College might be transferred. President Wilson stated that this would be in conflict with the expectations of the Legislature. Further he expressed the expectation that the General College might serve as a laboratory school for the training of teachers for junior colleges and accordingly ought to be physically close to the College of Education which will remain on the present campus. The possibility of moving the Law School was raised. President Wilson agreed that the self contained character of the Law School would make this reasonable but pointed out that the recent completion of a new law library at the present site introduced complications. The President indicated that it was not too late for ideas regarding better employment of the facilities across the River.

Regarding the status of the new bridge, President Wilson described the physical arrangements which would provide for pedestrian traffic (two 27-foot walkways on a second level covered by a canopy). He said that there was still a question about whether or not the State or University will have to pay the cost of the upper level. It had appeared that agreement would be reached favorable to the University until the recent change in the Office of Commissioner of Roads. The issue is still in the process of resolution.

4. Statewide Education

President Wilson reported discussions in the Liaison Committee on this matter, particularly the concept of an "Educational Common Market" which would lower the "tariff" barriers against non-resident students. If we were able to make such arrangements with neighboring states, Wisconsin students could come to Minnesota public colleges and Minnesota students to Wisconsin public colleges without paying out-of-state tuition. He said the idea was apparently well-received by the Liaison Committee. [The President's suggestion to the Liaison Committee was widely reported in the press.]

C. Report on Meetings with the Faculty on the Duluth Campus, January 29-30, 1962

1. Student-Teacher Ratio

Members of the Duluth faculty expressed discouragement because their student-teacher ratio (stated to be 21:1 as against a fixed 20:1 for the state colleges) continues to deteriorate with no apparent relief in sight. They feel that the ratio is worse than the figures indicate since the state colleges include extension students in the calculation and Duluth does not.

2. Teacher-Training Problems

Of particular concern to faculty was the honorarium of \$60 paid per student teacher to the host teacher by the State Colleges versus the \$32 paid by the University and the inability of UMD to provide practice teacher supervision. It was further pointed out that: (1) UMD has no regular supervisors against Bemidji's eleven; (2) The State Colleges provide one supervisory visit each two weeks; (3) The supervision by UMD faculty must be done on top of heavy teaching loads. It was stated that the advantage in teacher placement by the State Colleges provides them with an edge in the recruitment of high school students in the view of the Duluth faculty.

3. Staff Recruitment

There are dual problems:

- a. Difficulty in attracting and holding competent faculty against competition from institutions which can offer research and graduate teaching.
- b. Difficulty in being financially competitive against comparable institutions.

4. Desire for Graduate Programs

The arguments were several:

- a. Relief for senior faculty from laboratory instruction and preparation.
- b. Improvement in faculty morale by the intellectual challenge of advanced study.

- c. A reduction in the cost of instruction.
- d. The stated need for subject matter majors to support their teacher-training activities.

During the discussion of this matter the direct question was put: "If Duluth has the staff and facilities to carry on graduate programs, what would happen if the proposal were put to the Administration?" The FCC members pointed out the many considerations which would enter into such a policy decision making it impossible for them to respond in a meaningful way. Doubt was expressed that the availability of graduate students to share in the teaching burden would reduce instructional costs.

5. Problem of Carrying on Research and Scholarly Activities

The discussion of Item 4 led to an airing of the difficulty of scholarly work superimposed on heavy teaching loads. Several faculty members stated that the loads on their Departments were such that they were discouraged from applying for single-quarter leaves. Others while expressing appreciation for grants received from the Graduate School pointed out that they had little time to carry forward the research funded by the grant. It was pointed out that monies are provided to fund replacements for a limited number of single-quarter leaves so that eligible faculty members should not let the opportunity for a leave go by default. The FCC suggests that consideration should be given to increasing the number of funded quarter leaves to alleviate this problem. Presently only ten per cent of the allowed total of forty are funded.

The aspirations of the Duluth faculty to both generate and disseminate knowledge were clearly evident. One Duluth faculty member spoke eloquently to this point. He related that a Graduate School grant had given him the means to carry forward a scholarly work but that it was accomplished with difficulty. He spoke with feeling about his frustration in being so heavily burdened with class room duties that the opportunity was denied to him of sharpening his mind by the challenge of exploring new ideas.

The problem of the teacher in a small college was brought into sharp focus for those who have the good fortune to be associated with a major unit where research opportunities are taken for granted. It appears to the FCC that even though graduate programs at Duluth may not yet be feasible, the desire for individual scholarly activities should be fostered. In many instances the problem is not research facilities but time. A solution could be found in an arrangement similar to that in the School of Business Administration on the Minneapolis campus where funds available on a competitive basis from a Ford Foundation grant make possible partial release of time from teaching duties for research. The availability of a similar plan at Duluth would do much to improve morale and ease the problem of attracting and retaining staff. The FCC urges an exploration of foundation interest.

At the second meeting, the comment was made that the sabbatical leave system was ineffective for reasons of economics and the suggestion that quarter leaves should be available (at periodic intervals) as a matter of right rather than on a competitive basis. The suggestion appeared to stem from

the problems mentioned in the previous meeting in accommodating quarter leaves in heavily loaded departments. It was pointed out that quarter leaves had been quite liberally granted with very few unsuccessful applicants and that the full quota of 40 was rarely utilized. Emphasis was again placed on the need for more funded leaves to assist over-burdened departments in finding replacements.

The FCC was urged to seek a change in the wording of the quarter leave plan to make for a more advantageous income tax situation. Quarter leaves impose unusual expenses. If the stipulation of a promise to return could be deleted, the income during a leave could classify as a research or study grant and qualify as tax exempt. The Summer Research Grants were cited as an example. Professor Nelson of the UMD faculty described an extended exchange of correspondence with the Internal Revenue Department on this point. The FCC agreed to inquire into this matter and asked Professor Nelson to forward pertinent correspondence to the secretary.

The FCC was asked to press for more Summer Research Grants which are particularly meaningful to the UMD faculty.

6. Miscellaneous Items

- a. The FCC was asked to inquire into the progress of the trimester system.
- b. Interest in a semester system was expressed with a statement that the Duluth faculty favored it by a small margin.
- c. The Duluth faculty expressed an interest in summer session teaching on either campus. The Science Departments at Duluth have an interest in summer appointments since they must cope with the advising of NSF undergraduate research participation grant recipients. Supervision can only be provided now if a faculty member himself has a research grant to provide him with summer support.
- d. Inquiry was made about the University's efforts on Amendment No. 2 and the Chairman related the FCC discussions with President Wilson.
- e. The Duluth faculty expressed interest in taking better advantage of distinguished lecturers who are brought to the Twin Cities and urged the FCC to seek some mechanism for this purpose.

UMD faculty reported the inconvenience which they experience because of delays in the distribution of pay checks. The FCC agreed to inquire into the possibility of preparing the pay checks sufficiently in advance so that they may be issued concurrently at all branches.

Consultative Committee Members

Will Myers, Chairman
William G. Shepherd, Secretary
Cyrus P. Barnum, Jr.
Robert H. Beck
Sherwood O. Berg
Harold W. Chase
Herbert G. Heneman, Jr.