

Minutes\*

**Faculty Consultative Committee  
Thursday, June 6, 2013  
1:00 – 3:00  
Room 238A Morrill Hall**

Present: Sally Gregory Kohlstedt (chair), James Cloyd, Chris Cramer, Will Durfee, Scott Lanyon, Russell Luepker, Elaine Tyler May, James Pacala, Ned Patterson, Paul Ranelli, Jeff Ratliff-Crain

Absent: none counted for a summer meeting

Guests: Professors Jigna Desai, Chris Uggen (incoming 2013-14 Committee members); Ole Gram (Assistant Vice Provost for Faculty and Academic Affairs); Professors Carl Flink and Karen Miksch (co-chairs, Senate committee on Academic Freedom and Tenure)

Other: Emily Lawrence (Office of the President)

[In these minutes: (1) committee business; (2) online faculty activity reporting system; (3) "Education Abroad Opportunities: Addressing Health and Safety Risks" proposed policy amendments]

**1. Committee Business**

Professor Kohlstedt convened the meeting at 1:00 and began by welcoming Professor Desai, elected by the Committee to replace her (Professor Kohlstedt) as she takes up the position of Acting Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Education for 2013-14. She also congratulated Professor Ratliff-Crain on his appointment as associate dean at Augustana College in Illinois.

Professor Kohlstedt also announced that Professor Lanyon was stepping down as chair of the Senate Committee on Faculty Affairs in order to serve as chair of the Special Committee on Graduate Education that is being jointly appointed by Provost Hanson and this Committee. As a result, the Committee needs to nominate (to the Committee on Committees) a new chair for the Committee on Faculty Affairs; after brief discussion, the Committee voted unanimously to nominate Professor Joe Konstan.

Professor Kohlstedt next asked for a brief off-the-record session in order that Committee members could provide her advice on what she should do to enhance graduate education at the University while serving as Acting Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Education. Committee members offered a number of suggestions.

**2. Online Faculty Activity Reporting System**

Professor Kohlstedt now welcomed Dr. Gram to the meeting to provide a report on the proposed online faculty activity reporting system; she asked that he explain the genesis of the proposal and what

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\* 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.

they are looking at. Dr. Gram distributed copies of a handout and reviewed its contents with the Committee.

Why an online faculty activity reporting system? Dr. Gram said that some colleges already have one but they are typically built in-house and expensive to maintain, which is not a good use of University resources. Current systems built by individual colleges are in silos that do not provide for standardization across colleges. The advantage of the system they are proposing is that it has added functionality that would make the jobs of chairs and others at the University easier (e.g., for preparation of accreditation reports).

Why now? Dr. Gram said there has been an ongoing effort, since 2007, and when she came to the University, Provost Hanson expressed an interest in developing a mechanism for the central administration to learn about, among other things, the number of articles published by University faculty (e.g., in *Nature*) and to learn about the extent of faculty involvement in international and public engagement activities. That is why an enterprise-level system is desirable. It could also help with the promotion-and-tenure process, which remains fundamentally a pen-and-paper system at present.

The instigation for the system, however, did not come solely from the provost, Dr. Gram said. The deans of the early-implementing colleges were ready to sign contracts with vendors, but the cost of a few separate contracts could exceed the cost of a single, consistent system serving everyone, and with those contracts the college information would not be comparable across the University when it was necessary to report aggregate data. So there was need for a central system, one that could also support individual unit needs.

Dr. Gram turned to the elements that must be present in any faculty activity reporting system. It must:

1. Allow faculty to enter annual accomplishments easily in an online repository and pull relevant information from existing databases (e.g. SRT data, PubMed, bibliographic databases such as Scopus), and needs to include international and public engagement activities;
2. Create efficiencies by streamlining processes around annual faculty activity report routing, the merit process, P&T;
3. Easily let faculty produce CVs as well as bio-sketches in sponsor approved formats;
4. Reduce redundant data entry by only entering data once;
5. Be flexible to allow for collegiate and departmental customization; and
6. Provide new data that will allow the University to highlight the accomplishments of its faculty.

Professor Cloyd said that the system needs to be able to work with data from Sponsored Projects Administration, including the funding source for subawards. Dr. Gram said that grant data could be difficult to integrate seamlessly but the hope is that there will be a way to pull data from the grants management database.

Dr. Gram reviewed the timeline for the project. The RFP was issued in April of this year, they received five proposals, identified two finalists, had vendor demonstrations, and there will be contract negotiations and implementation in summer/fall 2013. Dr. Gram said that both Provost Hanson and Vice President Studham have urged that the University must be more nimble in implementing software solutions, and even if the solution is not perfect, when colleges have been seeking a system for a number

of years, the institution must be responsive. The early implementation partners for the new system are the School of Public Health, the Carlson School of Management, the College of Education and Human Development, and the Duluth campus.

Dr. Gram noted that there has been considerable governance involvement in this issue and cited a 2008 joint report from the Senate Committee on Faculty Affairs, Senate Committee on Information Technologies, and Senate Research Committee calling for the establishment of a faculty activity database. He also provided a copy of a resolution from the Faculty Senate calling for a "comprehensive repository of University faculty and staff activity and expertise."

Using a diagram, Dr. Gram explained how data in the system would be gathered, including from existing databases (demographic, teaching, human resources, patents, SRT), the libraries for publication and citation data, and from the faculty member about international and public engagement, awards, media appearances, licensure and certification, and promotion-and-tenure dossier materials. President Kaler and Provost Hanson have expressed a need for the University to tell its story better about the great work that the faculty. The faculty activity reporting system will allow that important story to be better told. Dr. Gram provided a copy of a screen shot from one of the vendor's pages.

Professor Lanyon asked how the system would interact with SciVal. Would it help populate the system or would this one replace SciVal? Dr. Gram said that SciVal *may* help populate the system, but that is not clear at present. The new system would likely pull from bibliographic databases such as the Scopus database that also provides the bibliographic information for SciVal. Professor Uggem commented that Scopus lags behind Google Scholar and may not reflect publications in the previous year. How are they thinking about that—would citations be automatic or entered by hand? Dr. Gram said the new system cannot pull data from Google Scholar because Google, for contractual reasons, is not allowed to provide a mechanism for systems to pull data from Google Scholar. It may be that a faculty member will have to compile a list each year of what he or she has accomplished, but the information would be in the system rather than a separate faculty activity reporting document that faculty members now submit annually. Depending on availability, citations would likely be entered by hand and also pulled automatically.

Professor Kohlstedt asked if she would have to trigger a request for importing bibliographic data or if that would be done automatically. And will there be duplication? Dr. Gram said the data entries would likely not be in real time. There could be duplication.

Professor Lanyon observed, in looking at the screen shot, that there are a lot of categories of information and faculty members are not going to check all of them to see if they are accurate, but if they received a message once per year about what has been added, they would check on that. Dr. Gram agreed and said he did not believe that, on an ongoing basis, bibliographic data would be "pushed in" the system. Other elements such as a change of campus address, name, SRT and teaching data would appear automatically.

Will this be mandatory, Professor Bitterman asked? Dr. Gram said he did not have the answer to that question yet. They are being responsive to colleges, which they see as the real beneficiaries of the system and where faculty who have been using it for years embrace it. The long-term goal is likely that all faculty will participate, but implementation will be phased in. They will want to see how the system works and get feedback before rolling anything out to all colleges and campuses.

Professor Pacala said he could envision some faculty resistance; what could mitigate it would be output that is customizable, which would benefit the faculty member. In the Medical School CVs are very specialized and exhaustive; if the system will facilitate the compilation of a CV, it will be a benefit—and if not, it will be a disaster. If the system doesn't benefit the faculty and the departments in that way, Dr. Gram said, it isn't worth the investment.

Professor Durfee asked how much the system would cost and how it is being paid for. The contract negotiations will start once a vendor has been chosen, Dr. Gram said, and relative to other software, including SciVal, the licensing costs are expected to be quite low.

PeopleSoft does not like courses with multi-instructors, for example, and department heads and staff probably need to make heads or tails out of similar data which is differently categorized or labeled. Dr. Gram said they are well aware of that and can learn from the experiences of other major research universities that have implemented these kinds of systems.

Professor Luepker reported that he was on a School of Public Health committee planning a pilot program for a similar system and that committee raised several concerns. One is the assumption that faculty will enter the data. This could be a problem. Second, what are valid data? What are the limits for entering activities? Will there be definitions and guidelines? Third, some considered this a system for monitoring faculty.

Dr. Gram said those were good questions. Much of the data can be pulled centrally, so should not require excessive faculty data entry. It is not the intention of the administration to snoop CVs, and the implementation process will require thorough consultation with the faculty.

Professor Kohlstedt asked to what extent the information in the system would be accessible to others. It may be that certain fields are public and get pushed onto department Web sites whenever a faculty member updates his or her information. (e. g., a short biographical narrative—but only if the college or department believes it important). Much of the system would mirror the current process (each college asks for faculty activity reports).

In terms of faculty buy-in, Professor Lanyon said that as long as the output of the system is useful to department heads, the system will be supported.

Professor May said that she could see a number of advantages to the system and then thought about who would be advantaged. The University could capture and aggregate data to show to the world. But if the purpose of a faculty activity report is to obtain a larger raise, then it serves a different purpose, geared to individuals within their departments. The Faculty Activity Report would need to be customized to meet the needs of the department and the faculty, which is not the same as a showcase of aggregated data for the University. It may also be that there is something important to the department that is not captured in the system (or by the University). The reports do not have the same purpose for departments and for the University.

The idea is to put everything into the system, Dr. Gram said, and what would come out would be reports. It could issue a CV for promotion and tenure, it could issue a CV for use in one's discipline, and

it could issue other reports that departments would find useful. Some parts of the faculty activity report would likely not go beyond the department; the system would simply be a single entry point.

Professor Kohlstedt asked where things stood now and what comes next. Will they seek feedback? Dr. Gram said they have had a great deal of feedback already and have met with faculty members, associate deans, directors of information technology, and vice chancellors. The next step is to choose between the two finalists and then parse faculty activity reports from across the University to identify the elements they have in common and try to agree on the elements that should be included in the system. There will be others asked to participate, such as department chairs; there will need to be an ongoing and iterative taxonomical process to build and test the system. If it turns out not to be useful to faculty members, department heads, and colleges they will scrap it.

Professor Luepker asked what the go-live date is. Dr. Gram said the schedule is very aggressive but that they will adjust it to be sure that implementation is done right. Contract negotiations could be 6 weeks or 6 months—but they hope to have it implemented within a year.

Professor McCormick asked if the system would be flexible enough so that people can upload information that may not fit into any of the categories. It will be, Dr. Gram said.

Professor Kohlstedt thanked Dr. Gram for bringing the proposal to the Committee.

### **3. Education Abroad Opportunities: Addressing Health and Safety Risks Proposed Amendments**

Professor Kohlstedt next welcomed Professors Flink and Miksch, co-chairs of the Senate Committee on Academic Freedom and Tenure (AF&T), who brought proposed amendments to an administrative policy governing education abroad.

Professor Miksch began by reporting that about two years ago, faculty from the Department of Political Science spoke with AF&T about the authority of the International Travel Risk Assessment and Advisory Committee (ITRAAC), which

is responsible for deciding whether to suspend an education abroad opportunity sponsored by the University when a significant health or safety concern is raised regarding the opportunity. Prior approval of the Committee is required for any education abroad opportunity involving travel by University students to a location subject to a travel warning from the State Department." [The members of ITRAAC are the Associate Vice President and Dean for International Programs, the General Counsel, the Senior Vice President for System Academic Administration (which position no longer exists), and the Vice President for Health Sciences.]

They and other faculty were concerned that when graduate students wanted to do field research abroad, if the location of the work is on the State Department's warning list, the student needed ITRAAC approval. If the student did not receive approval but traveled and did the research anyway, he or she would not be eligible for aid and would not receive credit for the work.

AF&T met with Dean McQuaid (Associate Vice President and Dean for International Programs), General Counsel Mark Rotenberg, and Vice President Friedman and had a number of additional

discussions on the subject, including one with the Senate Committee on Research, Professor Miksch related. They also gathered information from other campuses. The recommendation from AF&T is graduate students be treated differently if they are doing field research abroad and that ITRAAC be given an advisory role in their travel. This proposal parallels the process at Berkeley; all waivers and insurance requirements remain in place and the role ITRAAC would be unchanged for undergraduates or for graduate/professional students taking coursework abroad. But for graduate students doing field work, the final decision would be made by the student's adviser and the department chair; the travel plan would have to be filed with ITRAAC for an advisory opinion. The concern that AF&T has is that if a student must obtain ITRAAC approval, that hurdle could stop research or could have a chilling effect on considering possible research.

Professor Flink emphasized that the proposed change applies only to graduate student field work. One question that arose was about the 23-year-old graduate student who did coursework outside the U.S. and wants to do research in that country; he or she would still require ITRAAC approval. They want to be careful about the "quieting" effect, even though ITRAAC has not rejected many applications; the Committee had anecdotal information that students hesitate to even enter process (if they want to study, for example, international conflict, which in most cases would require them to travel to locations on the State Department warning list).

Professor Lanyon asked if, should a student go back to a location two or three times, each trip would require approval or if it would be "once and done." Professor Miksch said they believed that currently approval is required each time. The adviser presumably knows what the student is doing and there would be a check-in, so they did not envision a need for continued re-approval. Professor Flink explained that AF&T tried to stay away from implementation; they assume a responsible adviser and department chair would check on a student who would go each year.

Professor Pacala said he was unaware of ITRAAC's existence but he was uncomfortable about the AF&T proposal. He said he did not like treating groups of students differently, and he assumes ITRAAC exists to protect students. There could be a conflict of interest for the adviser, whose career could hinge on sending graduate students into a dangerous area. If ITRAAC has a chilling effect on possible research, ITRAAC should be fixed and better policies should be developed.

Professor Miksch said that AF&T did consider the makeup of ITRAAC and noted that there are no faculty members on it, which is a problem. ITRAAC also can find it difficult to meet because of high level of responsibilities of the members. ITRAAC does need to think about student safety, she agreed, but there are also questions about academic freedom. Moreover, the State Department warning list is problematic. Some institutions will not allow any travel to a country on the State Department list, some have a policy similar to the existing University policy, and some are like Minnesota for undergraduates but have different rules for graduate students. AF&T believes graduate students can be treated differently because in their role there are academic freedom considerations that come into play.

Professor Flink added that graduate students are in a different class and should not be treated the same as other students when doing their job as researchers for their degree. He said that ITRAAC is about student safety—but it's also about University liability, and the institution tries to insulate itself from liability. The two aims can often work together—but they do not always do so. The process in place is very much about formalism.

Professor Uggen applauded the distinction for students doing field research in a graduate program. Graduate students receive ethics training while undergraduates do not, and he has had graduate students who needed to travel to dangerous places to do their research. What is the relationship between ITRAAC and the IRB?

Professor Miksch said the IRB is a part of the process because much of the kind of research that would be done would require human subjects approval, so in some cases ITRAAC could be partially redundant.

Professor Desai reported that she has a graduate student who is not permitted to go home to do research. The AF&T proposal is beneficial for a number of students. Would the change also apply for students who want to attend conferences? Is that field research?

Professor Flink said there is no clean answer to the question. There would have to be consultation with the adviser and department chair; is the student going as a participant or to do research?

Professor Ranelli said that at first he wondered why this issue was coming from AF&T, and he also asked whether the research being done is the student's or the faculty member's. And what happens if a student wants to go on his or her own?

On the last question, Professor Flink said there have been students who traveled on their own, without the University's knowledge, outside the process. The University does not attempt to stop such travel, it just falls outside the process. But in that case, if the student is doing thesis field work, Professor Miksch said, he or she should not be able to use it for the thesis. The staff in the study-abroad office try to get information to students but some of them go without registering or permission. This gets into a murky area, but as she said, technically the student cannot use the results of the research in that case.

Professor Ranelli said he saw this more as a risk-management issue than one of academic freedom. Professor Flink said that if risk management has an adverse effect on the freedom of choice of research topic, and if the University process deflects students from research they want to do, AF&T is concerned about the quieting effect on creative and original research.

Professor Ratliff-Crain recalled IRB panel discussions where graduate students' research would take them to places such as Iraq; the IRB is reluctant to weigh the safety of the researcher when approving or denying a study. Its focus is on the safety of human subjects, and they knew about ITRAAC, which they felt relieved them (the IRB) of the responsibility of worrying about the researcher's safety. If the policy is changed, it cannot be assumed that the IRB will watch out for researcher safety in the same way.

Professor Ratliff-Crain asked, per Professor Pacala's point, if there would be University liability if something bad happened to a graduate student doing field work in a dangerous area. If so, that result could affect the ability of others to travel. Is the University responsible if there is a problem?

Professor Flink said the proposed change would replace the existing process. If a graduate student goes through the process, and receives adviser and department chair approval and obtains an advisory opinion from ITRAAC, he or she would have University protection. What this Committee and the president need to consider is whether consultation with the chair and adviser enough. The student

would be required to file a timely report with ITRAAC in order to obtain an advisory opinion; he said he did not believe anyone would ignore advice from ITRAAC if it expressed reservations about a student's proposed travel.

Professor Cramer said that in the worst case a student gets killed in Damascus. There would be legislative questions and news stories, and there will be the question of who approved the travel. This could be a bad story for the University. There could be a conflict of interest inside the department. Why not require that the dean receives a recommendation from the department as well as the ITRAAC report?

Professor Flink said AF&T discussed such a possibility but ended up believing the decision should be put in the department and thought they had addressed the potential conflict of interest problem. If this Committee, however, does not believe there are sufficient protections, the dean would be in a good in-between position. They were thinking about timelines, Professor Miksch said, and when a student might expect a response, especially if the research is time-dependent (e.g., research on an election taking place in the near future). The number of layers the student must go through can cause delays.

Professor Cloyd said he agreed with Professor Cramer that there is need for a third party. In terms of a quieting effect, it could be that a student has a great opportunity to do research in Damascus but the faculty member (adviser) does not want the student to go there because he or she does not want to end up on the front page of the newspaper. What protection is there for faculty? Is there University coverage for them?

Professor Flink said that the faculty role falls under the umbrella of the policy and the ITRAAC process; it just replaces the requirement that the graduate student doing field research receive ITRAAC approval. The travel would be an approved research project. The University would have to develop administrative procedures to implement the change. AF&T was looking at the impact on academic freedom, not about a faculty member's concern that a student might be in harm's way.

Professor May said that much falls outside the policy. A student might go to what seems to be a safe place to do research and it suddenly turns into a hot spot. Students traveling are always at risk. She said she supports the spirit of what AF&T is trying to achieve and that ITRAAC members are not held accountable for the decisions they make. (Professor Cramer demurred from the last assertion.)

Professor Flink agreed that there is a conflict: ITRAAC is removed from the research but a faculty member could benefit from a student's research. AF&T's view was that the department chair would consider the matter. But chair might believe the student's research would raise the reputation of the department; would that also be a conflict of interest? He said he could accept a proposal to change the locus of approval to the dean or associate dean.

Professor May asked if the process would come into play with students who are already in the field doing research. The questions about conflict of interest and news media interest are important, but so is freedom of research.

Professor Miksch said that Dean McQuaid informed AF&T that if the University knows a student is in a place, it can assist the student in getting out if trouble occurs. One concern Dean McQuaid has expressed is that if the University does not know that a student (or a faculty or staff member) is in a location, it cannot help. That is the reason why everyone should always let the University know where

they are—which does not mean seeking University approval—so it can help get them out if there is trouble. On Professor May's specific question about needing approval if already abroad, Professor Flink said they would defer to the administration on that point.

Professor Ratliff-Crain reviewed the possible difficulties with the current policy—the potential chilling effect on research, problems of timing, and conflicts of interest that could go either way—but a dean could be even more risk-averse than ITRAAC or others. Why not a committee of experts that would not face the scheduling problems that ITRAAC may? He said he was concerned about making ITRAAC's role purely advisory.

Professor Lanyon asked if AF&T had considered excluding graduate students from coverage by the policy altogether and treated them like faculty members instead. They did, Professor Flink said, and were concerned about the 22-year-old who just graduated and entered a graduate program; sometimes they may study abroad but not do research and AF&T believes the policy should continue to cover such students.

Professor Ranelli inquired if the cases might go to the Graduate School. They have not done so in the past, Professor Flink said, but per Professor Ratliff-Crain's suggestion, it could establish an ITRAAC-equivalent that was more representative. The AF&T proposal places the authority in the hands of experts. They may still have a conflict of interest but they also have the greatest depth of knowledge about an area and are true experts consulting with students. The administration could create expectations that departments would go through a certain process. If there is another committee created, however, that is another process that is distant from the student.

Professor Uggen said there is much local expertise, and one chilling effect of the policy could be less international research conducted by University students. And one could be at great risk doing research in Stillwater prison, because the prison authorities warn there will be no negotiating with prisoners for release of someone captured. This is an academic freedom issue, he reaffirmed.

Professor Flink observed that one AF&T member, a non-U.S. citizen, said that from the point of view of other countries, the ITRAAC process is very insulting and that there are a number of places inside the United States that should require ITRAAC approval for travel for students.

Professor Pacala commended the discussion but said he still favored a third-party independent peer review, and by experts would be optimal. Professor Ranelli agreed. Professor Kohlstedt said there was not a consensus and that AF&T needs to develop some middle ground proposal because there remains concern about a conflict of interest. She said the Committee would need to hear from them again but she commended AF&T for the work it has done and for the thoughtful discussion.

Professor Kohlstedt thanked Professors Flink and Miksch for bringing the proposal to the Committee and adjourned the meeting at 3:00.

-- Gary Engstrand