

Minutes\*

**Senate Committee on Finance and Planning**  
**Tuesday, November 9, 1993**  
**3:15 - 5:00**  
**626 Campus Club**

Present: Irwin Rubenstein (chair), Mary Askelson, David Berg, Mark Davison, William Gerberich, Michael Hoey, Craig Kissock, Fred Morrison, Roger Paschke, Richard Pfitzenreuter, Doris Rubenstein, Thomas Scott, Mary Sue Simmons, Susan Torgerson, Albert Yonas

Regrets: David Dahlgren

Absent: Karen Geronime, Karen Karni, Dianne Van Tasell

Guests: Vice President Anne Petersen

Others: None

[In these minutes: Strategic planning documents; health sciences reorganization]

**1. Strategic Planning Final Drafts**

Professor Rubenstein convened the meeting at 3:15 and announced that the first 15 minutes would be allocated to reading the planning documents, which were presented to Committee members at the meeting.

Following the reading session, Professor Scott inquired what action the Committee would take with respect to the documents. The Committee agreed it would draft a resolution to forward to FCC reflecting its views on both procedural and substantive elements of the planning documents; that resolution will be adopted at the next meeting. Even though it was later clarified that the Board of Regents will act only on the mission and vision statement--with the other two documents considered appendices--the Committee resolution should speak to all three.

One Committee member then observed, apropos the "Financial Issues" document, that it contains no answers--it was not intended to--and thus requires more work. The dimensions of the problem are clearly laid out; the Committee must "participate vigorously" in the discussions that will be needed. Most of the hard questions, it was then said, have been deferred; cluster planning will need to address a number of issues that have in the past been buried. These will also require a lot of consultation. This process has only begun. These documents, another Committee member agreed, lay out a "plan to plan," not a plan--and it is difficult to imagine how anyone could disagree with what has thus far been presented.

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Approval of these documents, it was also said, should not be seen as a license to implement anything without bringing proposals back for review.

One Committee member then expressed dismay that there are a number of assumptions contained in the documents that may not be appropriate. One, for example, is the assumption that clusters should be used for planning. Are there not some other means of achieving the goals? The clusters exist to the extent they have responsibility for issues associated with their units, commented another Committee member. They are real in that they will be expected to do certain things.

What happens if they prove not to be suitable? it was inquired. They can be shuffled or rearranged, it was said in response. But are there not other mechanisms that could be used? The notion, it was said, is that units--primarily colleges--will be put in clusters where there is a confluence of activities that could be thought about collectively rather than independently within the colleges.

One alternative approach, it was said, would be to organize activities across the University in terms of the five goals. The clusters are a step in that direction, it was said, but it is hard to do anything across the entire University or entire Twin Cities campus. There may be a number of ways to accomplish the ends being sought. In the long run, it is possible that there could be reorganizational implications from cluster activities, although it is far too early to predict that outcome. Or there could be financial implications from different arrangements of activities. Although much of the discussion has focused on University College, it may be the clusters that have the biggest eventual impact on the University.

How will the cluster groups be chosen? asked one Committee member. The deans and appropriate vice presidents have been asked to develop processes for cluster planning. That has led to a concern, observed another Committee member, that this will be a vice presidential operation with minimal faculty involvement and will be an attempt to do an end-run around the colleges and the Senate governance system. The President should be prepared to address that issue at the November 18 Faculty Senate meeting--and the answer should not be a denial of the concern but rather an identification of the way research and teaching faculty will participate in the cluster planning groups. One can worry about non-teaching administrators making all the decisions.

If this enterprise is about partnerships, added another, the other groups to be involved should be included from the beginning.

Another Committee member said the clusters do not cause concern; to an extent, they contribute to the effort to build community and fracture the barriers that exist between units. The symbolism of the clusters is worth supporting. A concern expressed, that cluster planning would precede and thus supersede college planning, was allayed by the understanding that the deans would serve on all appropriate clusters.

The vice presidents have been asked to identify members of the cluster planning groups, reported another Committee member; if membership is a concern, it should be communicated to the administration. A lot of fears will be allayed--or engendered--once the membership of the cluster planning groups is known. It would also be helpful to see the charges to the cluster groups; Professor Rubenstein asked that they be provided to the Committee.

One point in the "Financial Issues" document warrants change, said one Committee member; it now reads ". . . the University's contributions through its teaching, research, and outreach to Minnesota's economy and quality of life are not quantifiable." It should not be so defensive, it was argued. But if one says they are quantifiable, everyone looks for numbers--and people begin to rely on numbers that may not mean anything.

And numbers, said another Committee member, overlook the non-quantifiable impact of the University, such as on the cultural life of the state. The statement is not intended to be defensive; it says the effect goes far beyond what be counted.

Committee members then touched on a number of other issues in the documents. Then one member of the Committee commented that some of these are "picky" issues. It was said that these documents represent "planning for planning" as if that were a problem. There are clear implications here--clustering, interdisciplinary activities--and they are thrusts that offer guidance and direction as implementation is carried out. There is now more context than earlier--there is a vision of what the University should be as well as an enumeration of the financial questions that must be addressed. One can sense that "things are coming together" and that there is direction--quite apart from whether or not one agrees with the direction.

Asked by one Committee member if faculty have a clear sense of their role in the next six months, it appeared that coordinate campus faculty probably have a better understanding than do Twin Cities faculty. One individual said that faculty in his unit believe they have almost no role--that they are to be "planned."

The plan talks about empowerment, it was observed; if that is to mean anything, it should include the empowerment of faculty and staff to enter into the planning process. If it does not, it misses the boat entirely. But how faculty and staff enter the process is not at all clear; anyone reading the documents would be challenged to figure out how to become involved.

It was then said that the deans must create the atmosphere. More important, it was said, they must create incentives! That would be welcome. These are terrific goals, it was then said; very few can reasonably oppose them. How will they be accomplished? What is the faculty role now? The faculty can assent to the goals and that the process should now move on. It may also be that one should not assume that the process will be pernicious. While the description of the cluster discussions "do not make me feel warm" and convey a sense that they will be top-down, one senses there will be participation.

It would help, commented one Committee member, if there were a paragraph acknowledging that the life of the University comes from faculty and staff--and that implementation must be based on them. Another Committee member agreed that ideas for implementation must come from faculty and staff and that there must be something in the process that calls forth their creative talents. And those talents are there; people are eager to enter the discussions. But this element of planning is NOT spelled out in these documents.

It would be appropriate, concluded one Committee member, to adopt a resolution saying the Committee approves the mission and vision statement, note that the financial issues document raises the right questions that must be consulted on, but that the third document causes concern about the process

that will be used.

## **2. Health Sciences Reorganization**

Professor Rubenstein next welcomed Vice President Anne Petersen to the meeting, whom he had invited to discuss the draft of "Proposed Principles guiding some Relationships between the Health Sciences and the University as an Institution"; he had discussed these issues previously with her so asked her to join the Committee to continue the discussion. The draft was also distributed to Committee members at the beginning of the meeting.

Vice President Petersen said the draft had just been released and that she had been asked by Senior Vice President Infante to emphasize that it is still a DRAFT. It has been discussed with the Health Sciences management group; they wished to see the principles begin with a positive statement about the role of the Provost, to avoid misunderstanding. The document has not been discussed elsewhere, to her knowledge; if one were to speculate, she said, it is likely that the debate will be between those who believe the principles are not strong enough and those who think they are too constraining. Senior Vice President Infante welcomes comments from the Committee, she said.

What is the general intent? queried one Committee member. The document reads as though the Health Sciences are like all other colleges on the Twin Cities campus--one among equals. That is one intent, Dr. Petersen replied. At least among the vice presidents there is the feeling that the rest of the campus needs the Health Sciences--that the University would be incomplete without the scholarly interactions with Health Science units. These principles are intended to help frame those expectations of interaction: that the Health Sciences will continue to play an interactive role. The gist, she agreed, is that Health Sciences are to be very much involved in the life of the University.

One provision of the draft calls for a strengthening of the Council of Biological Deans; what does that mean? There is a sense, Dr. Petersen said, that it is not playing as much of a role as is needed, although there are good reasons why it has not. It has not had a recurring budget (it now has a small one) to enhance collaborative efforts. It could also be a leader in advancing certain areas of graduate education. By one measure, half of the faculty of the University are in the biological sciences, but their impact is less strong than the numbers suggest. She said she is persuaded that it would be helpful to have a mechanism to ensure that basic things are done well, so that the University can take advantage of opportunities that may come along.

It appears, said one Committee member, that most of the actions taken thus far make the Health Sciences more separate while the principles say they are not. Nor is it clear, it was said, how the actions taken thus far make the Health Sciences more accountable to the University, rather than less.

That is part of the tension, Dr. Petersen replied. The hope is that the reorganization will correct the problems that have arisen in the past, but oversight remains a controversial issue. The Medical School rightly wants a chance to demonstrate that it can do its job--they say that if it is put into "receivership," it will get weaker, not stronger. If there are faculty concerns about accountability, however, it is certainly fair to express them.

One Committee member said he had two opposing views about the principles. One is that there

ought not be a Provost; this is one academic community and it should respond collectively to the problems. Two, these principles suggest that if there is another Medical School mess, both she [Dr. Petersen] and the Provost should be fired. Some would say it should only be one of the individuals--but they should both be fired as co-conspirators who are not accountable.

Dr. Petersen expressed doubt that it was quite that simple. With exceptions, she said, there is not just one person to blame. Any organization must have authority and responsibility in the line officers--such as deans and department heads--if it is to function; they must be responsible for day-to-day operations. In addition, there are areas within the University where the INSTITUTION has responsibility; research is one, compliance functions are another. There must, correspondingly, be institutional oversight. (That is why grants are made to institutions, not to people.) There are areas where responsibility must be shared.

She also observed that the nature of the responsibility also differs on some issues. With compliance, for example, it is important to have an impartial party responsible for oversight to balance any conflicts of interest that might bias views--one way or the other--within an academic unit.

Her responsibility in the area of Use of Human Subjects, for example, she told the Committee, is to ensure that the committees are functioning to protect human subjects from research risk. Protection of human subjects also requires the assistance of line officers and faculty. Those working closely with research have the responsibility to prevent the emergence of problems whenever possible, and to report problems when they arise. The central responsibility also involves regular educational efforts with researchers to ensure that all know the issues and how to behave responsibly.

There must be clear expectations about who has ultimate responsibility, contended one Committee member. Shared responsibility is nice but it can often become "it's the other guy's responsibility." One can read this document to say that if everything in the Health Sciences works well, it is because the University made it work well; if things go badly, it is because the Medical School made it bad. That is the wrong tone. If the Vice President for Research is a line officer, it was said, he or she should take responsibility inasmuch as the position is no longer a staff role.

To continue with the human subjects example, Dr. Petersen said that it is the responsibility of the institution (through the Institutional Review Board or IRB) to investigate problems that arise. If a principal investigator has violated federal regulations, the University may remove his or her right to conduct research with human subjects. This is obviously not an attractive situation for a department. Such an outcome would reflect negatively on the department, so departments and especially their leadership have strong incentives to avoid such outcomes. If the IRB is told that there is a problem but does not investigate and take appropriate action, the Vice President for Research is responsible.

Dr. Petersen also affirmed--in response to a comment about the implications of all proposals needing to go through her office--that this is the current arrangement, because ORTTA reports to her.

The Board of Regents asked whether or not there are greater problems with here than at peer institutions. Nationally, the climate is changing and most universities are revising policies and practices to respond.

She also told the Committee that there will continue to be only one ORTTA; federal requirements are that there be an institutional entity to receive grants.

At some institutions the Medical School IS a separate entity that can receive grants; here it has been decided the Medical School will not be separate. There can be one ORTTA organized in different ways, it was pointed out; there could be two subdivisions, one for the Health Sciences and one for everything else, perhaps located in different buildings. Dr. Petersen said that physical location has little to do with efficiency but that some functions need to be together. Others, however, such as those associated with technology transfer, could be located elsewhere with appropriate coordination.

Asked how these principles could be seen as too restrictive, Dr. Petersen said some have said the tone is too negative--which she agrees is an appropriate concern. For example, if this document were given to candidates for Health Sciences Provost, would it generate concern? The degree of separateness of the Health Sciences will probably be debated until the issues are put to a vote by the Board of Regents.

In terms of being too permissive, some have noted that many of the statements are "may" rather than "shall."

Dr. Petersen concurred that this is a very contextual document, one that would have been interpreted quite differently if nothing had happened. Some in the Medical School are worried that they will be inappropriately "punished" for the problems. Any knowledgeable candidate, observed one Committee member, will fully understand the context of the principles.

What is the reporting relationship between the Health System President, the Provost, and the University President, asked one Committee member. The President of the Health Systems reports to the Board of Directors and also to the Provost, Dr. Petersen said; the Provost reports to the President of the University. Does that create competing loyalties? Dr. Petersen responded that the University health care system requires special attention and the steps that have been taken are essential. There may be some necessary tension between the need to compete for patients and serve University teaching and research missions. But Health Sciences needs patients so priority must be given to health care.

One concern is that a Provost candidate who was not given these principles could come to the University with the wrong assumptions. This could make recruiting easier. It's like a marriage--one can do it fast if it's based on misunderstanding but it won't last long; both should understand the situation so the University doesn't have an easy marriage but a rough divorce.

Is this just a change of name or is something more implied, Vice President Petersen asked rhetorically? In this case, there was the intent to imply more separation--but one can see that as a minor change. She said she did not have any sense of where Health Science faculty generally come out on separateness versus continued linkages.

This is an interesting draft, observed one Committee member, in that it has sections on finances, research, and external relations but nothing on academic relationships and faculty/staff relationships. Those should be the two most important elements of such principles. Dr. Petersen said the academic relationships are intended to be covered but the general point is a good one; there are linkages that extend beyond the biological sciences and they should be spelled out.

Is there any presumption of undergraduate teaching? Will a professorial appointment in the Medical School imply undergraduate teaching responsibilities? That is not resolved, Dr. Petersen replied. There are many courses taught to undergraduates that Medical School faculty could teach, it was pointed out. That is an issue that needs to be taken up with the Council of Biological Sciences deans; a number of the vice presidents want this obligation to be more explicit with ALL of the professional schools. One Committee member responded that professional schools are ready to respond if provided the resources.

Would there be a different tenure system in the Health Sciences? Dr. Petersen was asked. She said there would not be. Everything not mentioned in the principles--and tenure was not--would presumably remain the same.

There are a lot of concerns about academic issues, Dr. Petersen acknowledged, although the administration may not be hearing them. Committee members indicated that they ARE hearing these concerns expressed. It would be timely for them to be communicated to Dr. Infante, she told the Committee.

The Committee agreed that it would review any subsequent draft of the principles prior to their submission to the Board of Regents. Dr. Petersen said she would let the Committee know of any changes that are made.

Professor Rubenstein then adjourned the meeting at 5:00.

-- Gary Engstrand

University of Minnesota