

Minutes\*

**Faculty Consultative Committee  
Halloween 2002  
12:00 – 2:00  
7B HHH Center**

Present: Dan Feeney (chair), Gary Balas, Susan Brorson, Tom Clayton, Gary Davis, John Fossum, Marti Hope Gonzales, Mary Jo Kane, Marvin Marshak, Judith Martin, Jeff Ratliff-Crain, Martin Sampson, Charles Speaks

Absent: Muriel Bebeau, Arthur Erdman, Marc Jenkins, Candace Kruttschnitt

Guests: Mr. Douglas Leatherdale, Professor Judith Garrard (Commission on Excellence); Executive Vice President and Provost Christine Maziar

Other: Elizabeth Wroblewski (Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost)

[In these minutes: (1) discussion with Professor William Tierney, visiting scholar from USC studying institutional governance; (2) in memoriam, Mary McEvoy; (3) research secrecy subcommittee; (4) advisory committee for compliance; (5) Commission on Excellence report; (6) institutional measures; (7) other business]

Professor Feeney convened the meeting at 12:00 and first welcomed Professor Gary Davis, the newly-elected ex officio representative from the Duluth campus.

**1. Discussion with Professor Tierney**

Professor Feeney next welcomed Professor William Tierney, a visiting higher education scholar from the University of Southern California, who is conducting a site visit to the University of Minnesota as part of a national study of institutional governance and decision-making.

Professor Tierney noted that he had already spoken with some members of the Committee; others he had met when he was doing a study of tenure and visited the University during the tenure debate in the mid-1990s. He said he is a tenured professor of higher education and directs the Center for Higher Education Policy Analysis. In the course of his work he has visited numerous institutions in the last five or six years and has been struck by the complexity and number of decisions that need to be made and that quite frequently people express the view that they are not sure how to get the decisions done.

He noted that he is also an AAUP member, book review editor for ACADEME and a consultant; in those capacities, he said, he hears a lot of horror stories about the breakdowns of shared governance. He said there is no need for another study of the college president; his interest is in the faculty role in decision-making. He is also interested in the role of boards of regents/trustees: how they are elected and what information they should deal with.

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At present he is in the middle of a three-year funded study of institutional decision-making. The first year they surveyed 750 institutions (five individuals at each, including administrators and faculty); this year he is visiting 15 institutions to flesh out the study. That is the reason for his presence at Minnesota.

Most people look at Minnesota as a large, public institution with a governance system that works. If he had a headline for his survey, it would be that governance is not as bad as people think. One question for his study is whether there is enough trust between the faculty and administration for governance to work; 75% of each category of participant in the survey said that there is.

Professor Feeney inquired if Professor Tierney would publish the results of his study. Professor Tierney said that the governance literature is not very good and there will be a book with the study conclusions. He also conducts a summer seminar for new faculty on governance, and he has commissioned papers from a variety of senior scholars. The interviews he is conducting are confidential insofar as he said he is more interested in ideas about how communication works, what trust is and what is meant by the term. It means different things to different people.

Professor Feeney asked if Professor Tierney was looking at whether administrators have faculty governance experience; he commented that those who have none often do not understand governance and see it as a threat. Professor Tierney said he has seen a slight increase in the number of administrators with governance experience but that he does not see this as a major change.

Professor Balas said the governance system at Minnesota should talk to new faculty; they have no knowledge of it. Professor Tierney said he was also interested in socialization. If assistant professors ask what is needed to make it at a university, they are told to focus on their teaching and research and otherwise keep their head low. It is odd to tell them to keep their head low for the first six years and then suddenly expect them to begin speaking up. What if senior faculty recruited to the institution were expected to participate in governance? One senior faculty member at this university related to him, Professor Tierney said, that when he was recruited, he would be a faculty member at the University of Minnesota in the field of X; now faculty are recruited in the field of X who happen to be at the University of Minnesota.

Professor Feeney thanked Professor Tierney for joining the meeting to explain the purpose of his study.

## **2. In Memoriam: Professor Mary McEvoy**

Committee members expressed their deep sorrow over the death of Professor McEvoy in the plane crash on October 25. In keeping with the tradition of the Senate of honoring deceased colleagues, the Committee held a moment of silence in Professor McEvoy's memory.

The Committee decided it would make a contribution to the scholarship fund for Professor McEvoy's children.

## **3. Research Secrecy Subcommittee**

Professor Balas next reported that the Senate Research Committee was unanimous in its view that the proposed standing subcommittee, charged to review requests for exceptions to the Regents' policy barring secrecy in research or restrictions on publication of research results, should be a subcommittee with all or a majority of members from the Senate Research Committee. They did not believe the Committee on Committees should appoint the subcommittee; they thought the Senate Research Committee should be in control. They also concluded that just because someone's term on the Senate Research Committee ended, the individual's term on the standing subcommittee would not necessarily end. The concern expressed by Senate Research Committee members was that there not be another layer added to the approval process; if the subcommittee members were not members of the Senate Research Committee, the latter would be inclined to re-review each request.

Professor Feeney said he did not disagree with the concern; his only question was about process. Other subcommittees include members of the parent committee but also non-committee members appointed by the Committee on Committees. The question that FCC posed is whether the Senate Research Committee should appoint the entire membership of the subcommittee.

The Senate Research Committee goes against the norm, Professor Kane said; is this Committee comfortable with that? If the appointment of the subcommittee will not follow standard practice, she wanted to hear a good rationale. Professor Feeney concurred, saying that the subcommittee needed "intermittent hybrid vigor" in order to have different perspectives. There is an indoctrination process that takes place on committees; should there be views from outside?

The Research Committee was expanded considerably last year so it does not consist of a large group of old-timers, Professor Balas pointed out; he repeated that the idea was to keep the subcommittee membership within the Senate Research Committee in order to avoid adding another layer of review and thus prolonging the deliberations. The Research Committee would not agree to appointment of a subcommittee that was not comprised mostly of Research Committee members.

Professor Gonzales said she agreed with the need for "intermittent hybrid vigor" and commented that these are potentially volatile issues; the subcommittee would be in a better position if chosen in the way people are selected for other subcommittees. That does not preclude Senate Research Committee participation. Professor Speaks said everyone hopes this will not be a very busy subcommittee; it may be that different expertise will be required for each request so that ad hoc committees may be appropriate. Use of ad hoc committees, however, would be contrary to the report of the Kruttschnitt Committee, which urged creation of a standing committee that would develop expertise. Professor Balas agreed, saying they want to see long-term members who build up an expertise in the law and federal regulations; it would also have ex officio representation from the General Counsel's office (Mr. Bohnhorst) and the Vice President for Research office.

The Committee agreed that the subcommittee should consist of perhaps five members, with three or four appointed by the Senate Research Committee and that membership after that would be considered by the Committee on Committees. The Committee decided it would review a draft proposal at its next meeting.

#### **4. Advisory Committee for Compliance Office**

Professor Balas also reported that Mr. Schumacher, the University compliance officer, has established a small brain-storming group to offer him advice. Mr. Schumacher asked Professor Balas to serve; Professor Balas said he believed that Professor Scott McConnell was more appropriate and asked him to serve. Professor McConnell has agreed to serve.

## **5. Commission on Excellence**

Professor Feeney now invited Mr. Douglas Leatherdale and Professor Judith Garrard to the table to lead a discussion of the report of the Commission on Excellence. Mr. Leatherdale, retired Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of the St. Paul Companies, had been appointed chair of the Commission by Governor Ventura.

Mr. Leatherdale thanked the Committee for asking him for comments. He said the Commission was "a most interesting exercise." He acknowledged that he was not an academic, although he has been involved with the University for a number of years, including a term as chair of the University of Minnesota Foundation Board of Trustees. Nor was he a graduate of the University, he said; he is a Canadian, educated in Canada, who also did graduate work at Berkeley and the Harvard Business School. When the Governor called him, he recalled, he had told the Governor that he was not a U.S. citizen and could not vote for him; the Governor told him he wanted someone who would take charge and get the task done, although he (the Governor) did not expect much from the Commission.

The Commission had very interesting discussions and debate and drew conclusions that are important for the University and the State. The Commission was set up by the legislature to review the University's current nationally-ranked efforts, to examine the investments made in the interdisciplinary programs identified by the University in its 1998 legislative request, and to identify an additional five fields in which the University could reach the top ten in the next five years. The legislation creating the Commission was authored by Mr. Pawlenty.

The Commission concluded immediately that it could not identify fields in which the University could be in the top ten in the next five years; it also concluded that it would be inappropriate for it to try to do so. It was also charged to examine the University's mission, scope, and financing, which the Commission thought was too much for it to tackle. It was also asked to identify undergraduate degree programs which could be made more productive through collaboration with other private and public higher education institutions in the state. The Commission decided that was fraught with political implications with which it could not deal.

The Commission had 15 members: 4 appointed by the Senate, 4 by the House of Representatives, 4 by the Governor, and 3 by the Board of Regents. The people who served had expertise in complex organizations and were leaders in business and industry. It was a diverse group, Mr. Leatherdale said.

The Commission was mindful that there would be a new University president and that a high percentage of legislators would turn over in the election so it wrote its report with the expectation that presidential candidates and new legislators would read it carefully. Mr. Leatherdale said he hoped to be invited by legislative committees to talk about the report.

The goals set out by Commission for the University include being in the top five public research universities in the country and being among the top ten in the quality of its undergraduate programs. The

Commission recognized the unique scope of the University; it decided that scope was both challenging and appropriate. That scope, however, needs to be supported by the legislature and the public because the University must make choices—because it must compete with other institutions across the nation.

The Commission quickly recognized that the five centers of excellence identified in 1998 had met their initial objectives. They had achieved prominence, but significantly greater investment in digital technology and microbial and cellular biology would be required if they are to retain their leadership position. So before the University initiates any new centers of excellence it must provide adequate funding to sustain and build on what has been achieved with the initial five.

If the University is to be a top research university, it must have an excellent undergraduate program; at the best institutions, teaching, research, and outreach are linked. The Commission was pleased by the graduate and professional programs but achievement of excellence will require extra focus, setting priorities, and aggressive reallocation of internal funds. Achievement of excellence will also require additional support from the state and from the private sector. Mr. Leatherdale drew attention to the Commission statement that it is absolutely imperative the University be funded at a higher level.

The Commission talked about the University's mission, which is greater than that of most research universities. He reminded Committee members that while they may understand that, the report is addressed to legislators, the public, and the new president. They wanted people to understand the unique, complex responsibilities assigned to the Twin Cities campus—because if they do not, they will draw the wrong conclusions. They looked at Texas, Wisconsin, Washington, etc., and none of them have both agriculture and the health sciences; the breadth and complexity of the institution makes cross-institutional comparisons difficult, Mr. Leatherdale said, and the Commission thought it important to talk about the difference and that the public recognize it.

The Commission noted the leveraged funds used in the five 1998 initiatives and thought the achievements were impressive. They also felt strongly that the University should accelerate its investments in excellent programs by aggressive reallocation of funds. They also told the State it must fund the University at a higher level if it is to achieve the excellence the state expects and deserves. The Commission recognized that all of the funding needed will not be available from the legislature so the University must look inward and refocus its own funds—it is for that reason the Commission urged that the University not start any new initiatives until it was sure it could sustain the existing activities. The University will not stand out, be in the top tier, without a lot of effort, Mr. Leatherdale observed, because its peer institutions are doing the same things. The University must be agile and focused on where it can achieve.

The Commission noted the University's long-standing distinction in agricultural research and said it needs to continue. This field will not require a lot of new funding but it must continue to be able to respond quickly to problems in Minnesota. Professor Garrard commented that the agriculture fields are the first responder in the same way that the Centers for Disease Control are for disease in the nation; it responds to crises. She acknowledged that she did not know this before serving on the Commission. Mr. Leatherdale said the report talks about the enviable reputation of the agricultural activities of the University; it is a true center of excellence that must be maintained. It will not, however, require funds at the same level as digital technology or microbial and cellular biology. The other interdisciplinary centers have accomplished what they set out to do and can be funded through the University's normal budget process.

The Commission talked about the value of research and the need for the University to build on what it has achieved. Everyone on the Commission could see how the University's research has played into the economy of the state; the public must see that as well and should not underestimate the amount of research at a high level that comes from the University and is leveraged into the state's economy. This must be understood if the University's story is to be sold at the legislature. While Mr. Leatherdale said he did not personally know if it was valid, the report from the University of Florida, describing Minnesota as one of the top three public research universities in the country makes for good headlines. The research programs are core contributors to the University's reputation and mission and have an enormous impact on the health and vitality of the whole state.

The University cannot ignore its undergraduate program if it is to achieve excellence and national ranking. It needs to improve graduation rates as one way to achieve excellence. The Commission looked at the University's graduation rates compared to other institutions; while the rate has improved the last few years, it is still abysmal. As long as the rate stays that low, the University will have a difficult time achieving the level of excellence it seeks. He said the Commission believes that admissions standards, retention, and graduation rates must all increase if the University is to achieve top-ten status for its undergraduate programs.

Professor Kane asked if the Commission looked at any top public research university that also had a top tier undergraduate program. Committee members responded by mentioning Washington, Berkeley, Virginia, and Michigan as examples. All of them, Professor Martin pointed out, have very different admissions standards from this university.

Professor Speaks said that the actions the University has taken thus far will improve graduation rates but it is the attitude and belief system of faculty and staff that also have to change. All now press students to register for more credits, but there is a culture here that the University must keep open access, not be elitist, and allow students to control what they do. If the culture is not addressed, there will be some change but not enough.

The Commission said the 4-year graduation rate should be 50%, Mr. Leatherdale told the Committee, and the University should take aggressive steps to achieve it. It is not now half-way there. But the Commission believed if the goal was not set, the University would not achieve it.

The Commission talked a lot about how the state deserves a top-notch university and that the University has the authority to achieve that goal so it was comfortable laying out the challenge. The goal was simple to articulate, he acknowledged, but it will require much work to achieve.

Are any of the top five or top ten public universities also land-grant universities, Professor Kane asked? They appear not to be. The University needs to communicate to the legislature and the public what the mission is, she said, and that no land-grant research university is also in the top ten or top five. Mr. Leatherdale said they talked a lot about the peculiar status of the University as a land-grant institution with an incredibly broad mission, which makes the job more difficult. The University has the autonomy to achieve the goals, however.

It cannot be a top research university on stilts, Professor Garrard said; it must be a pyramid, with undergraduate education at the base and the research university on the top. If one does a multivariate

analysis of the factors to increase the graduation rate, some the University can't control, such as the culture in Minnesota that parents expect their children to pay for their college education. That culture must be changed so that parents understand they must pay; students cannot work 50% time and go to school.

Professor Speaks wondered if there were data to support that assertion. Professor Marshak said that Minnesota does have the highest percentage of people employed in the nation; the only ones not working are those under 14 and the elderly. Some states don't like child labor but Minnesota seems to glorify it.

Professor Sampson said the University would welcome the challenge to increase the graduation rate. To get to 50% in four years, by his calculation, the University would need to retain 85% of each class as it progressed from freshman to senior. Mr. Leatherdale said the Commission recognized that the goals were lofty—and that it wasn't the group that had to implement them. Professor Sampson said, however, that he did not believe so much of the emphasis should be on the admissions process; retention is more important.

Mr. Leatherdale said it would be difficult for the University to reach the objectives without refocusing and without the Regents, administration, and University community making difficult choices. And it would need to accelerate the changes to align standards with the choices. The Commission recognized that the University will need strong support from the Regents, the legislature, and the public because the choices will take both funds and leadership; if the Commission recommendations are the direction the University wants to go, it will have to "re-prioritize" and re-focus.

All recognize that the University does more than most, Professor Martin said; it has lots of energy and ambition. But Minnesota is a small state; did the Commission talk about whether a state with 5 million people can support the university it envisages? The University has already done a lot of internal reallocation, and can do more, but it is just completing a \$1.3-billion capital campaign and now the Commission is asking it do more.

Professor Garrard said there were three sources of funds: the legislature, the private sector, and internal reallocation, and there will have to be difficult choices. What will this Committee do with the report? Will it provide instruction for new legislators? This was a unique commission, she said; she was the only faculty member; it was legislators and the community speaking. It also contained three sitting regents and one former regent. Has the Committee thought about what it will do with the report? It has not, Professor Feeny replied. Professor Garrard suggested that it should help get Mr. Leatherdale in front of the legislature; he is not part of the University. Professor Feeny promised the Committee would work on relations with the legislature.

Professor Marshak responded to Professor Martin's points. Five million people is enough, he said; Wisconsin and Washington both have about five million people and have excellent universities. California has about 35 million people and about six excellent universities. Minnesota is doing better than Indiana, which has a population of about five million and is trying to support two universities, and it is certainly doing better than Iowa, with a population of 2.5 million and shrinking, also trying to support two universities. Minnesota has the highest per-capita income in the region; in purchasing power, its incomes are among the highest in the nation. And the reason it is in this position now is because of the investments it has made in education in the past.

In terms of improving graduation rates, Professor Marshak continued, he said he is passionate on the subject. He was at the burial today of a student (Will McLaughlin, also killed in the plane crash that killed Professor McEvoy) who was 10 credits short of a degree. He represented the problem. It's the University's culture: students do not graduate soon enough, and then other opportunities arise. (If Will McLaughlin asked him, Professor Marshak said, whether he should finish the 10 credits or work on Senator Wellstone's campaign, he would of course have told him to work on the campaign.) But Mr. McLaughlin will be counted as one of the University's failures even though he was a tremendous success. One can indiscriminately turn the "admissions knob" and get a higher graduation rate with higher admissions standards but if it is turned too high the University will not serve the state as well. The University can change the inputs and the outputs, but what it really needs to change is the process—the culture—rather than the inputs.

Mr. Leatherdale said the Commission was sensitive to the issue of raising admissions standards. It believes the University should do so but at the same time it should not jeopardize the admission of minority students or access to the institution. At the same time, it felt the admissions standards should be "tweaked upwards."

Professor Marshak repeated his view that it is a cultural issue. 18-22-year-olds are very sensitive to peer pressure; if 10-15% are speculative admissions, that is fine, but if there are too many in that category, they will pull down the norm. If the University admits the right number, those students will be pulled UP to the norm. But the University will not, in any event, look like Carleton.

Executive Vice President and Provost Christine Maziar had joined the meeting. She agreed with Professor Marshak; she said the University must focus on outcomes, which is not antithetical to the recommendations of the Commission. In her view, focusing on graduation rates will make the programs more attractive, which in turn will increase the number of applications. The result will be an increase in selectivity because the University does not plan to increase the size of its programs. This phenomenon can already be seen around the campus. The challenge will then be to find students with talents that were not revealed in high school. She said the University will still have to work hard to ensure that students with the potential to succeed here will be able to do so.

Professor Fossum commented that the University is a land-grant institution—but a lot of other land-grant institutions have higher graduation rates, so the land-grant status is no excuse. Second, he said, the University must reallocate but it also must change the culture with respect to graduation rates.

Professor Kane thanked Mr. Leatherdale for serving as chair of the Commission. She said he would be an ally of the University and the Committee should find a way to work with him. She said she hoped he could testify before the legislature and deliver the message about what has become a vicious cycle: as higher education funding declines, there is more pressure on faculty to obtain external funding; then the legislature says it should not fund the University because the faculty are not in the classrooms. And why not? Because the University is under-funded. Also very important is that the reward structure in a Top 10 research university is not for what a faculty member does in the classroom. Either the reward structure has to change or there have to be differential reward structures. It is the kiss of death for a young faculty member to spend a lot of time in the classroom. Undergraduate teaching is the kiss of death for many faculty careers, she declared.

Those outside the University might not realize that faculty are evaluated by their peers in the department, Dr. Maziar observed. It is not the President who decides what will be held in high regard. At the same, however, funding is allocated to the colleges on other bases.

Professor Speaks agreed with Professor Kane in expressing appreciation to Mr. Leatherdale; he said he did not disagree with the recommendations of the Commission on Excellence. The problem is going to the next level. All agree that graduation rates are abysmal but the University must be careful what it says. It would be possible for the legislature to decide to divert higher education funding to financial aid; it must understand that doing so would harm the University. Dr. Maziar said she could provide data demonstrating that students who are getting more aid are the students at schools with higher graduation rates.

Professor Speaks said he agreed with the need for internal reallocation but cautioned that it will be more difficult than he ever imagined. It is not easy to get people to understand the difference between investment and reallocation and whether an investment is recurring or non-recurring. If the University decides on a goal of \$15 million for reallocation, as a percentage of the budget it seems like the size of "a postage stamp." Dr. Maziar said the entire budget cannot be used as the base; only the fungible dollars should be in the base. One can go to jail if one moves the other dollars, she observed.

Mr. Leatherdale urged Committee members to read the report; it has a wealth of good data for a simple read, he said. There were ten diverse people from different walks of life, all of whom agreed on the recommendations and agreed that the goals were difficult, but they are what help define what the Commission meant by excellence. He said he hoped the report would help a little.

Committee members expressed a heartfelt thanks to Mr. Leatherdale for his service as chair of the Commission. Dr. Maziar said he is a remarkable friend to the University and to the state.

Following Mr. Leatherdale's departure, Professor Sampson looked at the numbers again. If the University only retains 67-68% of each class from one year to the next, the graduation rate in four years will be about 20%. So it needs to get from 67% to 85% in order to achieve a 50% graduation rate. Professor Marshak pointed out the University retains 85% of its students from freshman to sophomore; it loses them later. The University offers a four-year graduation guarantee, for which the student must do nothing, but only 30% sign up for it.

## **6. Institutional Measures**

Dr. Maziar next distributed a handout outlining the University's institutional measures, developed a number of years ago; they are used with the Board of Regents to see if the institution is on track to improve. The Commission on Excellence adopted the measures.

The Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost often looks like "Reports R Us," Dr. Maziar commented. When he was Executive Vice President and Provost, Dr. Bruininks led a process to integrate the University's continuous reports into one document in preparation for the legislature; the document also includes ad hoc reports of various kinds. The report contains but goes beyond the institutional measures so that one can talk about the University in a broader way than just the measures without changing the rules of using the measures. Dr. Bruininks hoped that the University Plan and Performance report would minimize a lot more requests for information; unfortunately, that hope has not

yet been met. Nonetheless, Dr. Maziar said, she also hoped that as people become more familiar with the report they will turn to it for information.

Professor Sampson noted, in the handout, a comment that the University is changing the way it calculates retention and graduation rates in order to conform to federal, nationally-used standards. Beginning in 2000, the rate will be calculated only for "first time, full time" freshmen when they matriculate. Will this have an effect on the graduation rate, he asked? Professor Martin recalled that the Committee on Educational Policy had been involved in this discussion; it was given data illustrating the difference between those who enter the University and those who graduate from it (about the same number enter as graduate, but a large part of those who graduate are transfer students, who do not count in the graduation rate). The University was not counting apples and apples, she said. Ms. Wroblewski added that the need for "clean cohorts" led to the adoption of the new standard.

## **7. Other Business**

Professor Feeney reported that the charge to the accountability task force, co-chaired by Regents' Professor Tom Clayton and Vice President Kathleen O'Brien, had been sent out.

A letter has been sent to the Regents' Professors, McKnight Distinguished Professors, and members of the AAUP Executive Committee transmitting the draft unit governance policy and asking them for comments.

The questionnaire on the IRB/IACUC is evolving and will be distributed.

Professor Feeney adjourned the meeting at 2:15.

-- Gary Engstrand

University of Minnesota