

Minutes*

Faculty Consultative Committee
Thursday, September 30, 2004
12:45 – 2:15
4-300D Carlson School

Present: Marvin Marshak (chair), Gary Balas, Susan Brorson,¹ (Joseph Konstan for) Charles Campbell, Carol Chomsky, Tom Clayton, Dan Feeney, Mary Jo Kane, Morris Kleiner, Scott Lanyon, Judith Martin, Martin Sampson, John Sullivan, Carol Wells

Absent: Jean Bauer, Gary Davis, Emily Hoover, Kathleen Krichbaum, Fred Morrison, Jeff Ratliff-Crain

Guests: none

Other: Kathryn Stuckert (Office of the Chief of Staff)

[In these minutes: (1) strategic planning process; (2) treatment of athletes; (3) housing and residential life policies; (4) the difference of a research university; (5) nominees for the Faculty Academic Oversight Committee for Intercollegiate Athletics; (6) update on research secrecy issues; (7) all-University commencement; (8) FCC members who are candidates for administrative positions; (9) closing committee meetings to administrative ex officio members]

1. Strategic Planning Process

Professor Marshak convened the meeting at 12:45 and began with a report on the strategic planning process. The strategic planning committee spent considerable time debating how to phrase where the University is going; the debate is over aspirations versus credibility (aim to be in the top X number of research universities versus what will be believable). (The strategic planning committee includes Provost Sullivan, Deans Baugher and Rosenstone, Executive Associate Vice Provost Al Sullivan, Senior Vice President Jones, Vice President O'Brien, H. Jeanie Taylor, and Professors Feeney, Marshak, Martin, and Ratliff-Crain.) The discussion of the criteria to be used for judging programs revolves around whether they (the criteria) result in any variance when applied (e.g., centrality, quality and productivity, etc.).

What is the unit of analysis, Professor Kane asked? College? Department? Center? Presumably all of them, Professor Marshak said. Professor Konstan said that the list of criteria appears to include 3-4 things related to efficiency but only one related to quality. Was that intended? Is getting the most bang for the buck the number one criterion? The discussions about the criteria are dualistic, Professor Marshak said; it is aspirations versus the goal of cutting.

* These minutes reflect discussion and debate at a meeting of a committee of the University of Minnesota Senate or Twin Cities Campus Assembly; none of the comments, conclusions, or actions reported in these minutes represents the views of, nor are they binding on, the Senate or Assembly, the Administration, or the Board of Regents.

¹ Not present but only because the technology for connecting with the UMC campus was not available, so not counted as absent.

Later in the meeting, Professor Marshak thanked Committee members for their help in editing documents he had sent by email. He reported that Professor Chomsky had raised a concern that his report to the Regents had perhaps too much cheerleading for the strategic planning process. He said he was supporting it strongly because historically the University has not been adept at implementing strategic plans. He is trying to facilitate implementation of the eventual outcome by talking now about the importance of the process. It is important that the process is legitimate, he said; that point has not yet been tested. He may be going too far in cheering for the process, but, at the present time, he thinks that is the best strategy.

Professor Marshak also reported that he was surprised by what he learned when he read Article VII. B. of the Regents' bylaws. ("All matters relating to the education and administrative affairs of the University, consistent with actions or policies of the Regents of the University of Minnesota heretofore or hereafter taken or established and including those incident to the management of the student body are, for the purpose of effectuating the government of the University under and by the Regents, committed to the President, the University Senate, and the several faculties, as provided in the Senate Constitution and as amended from time to time.") The Regents have defined a parallel governance structure for the University, although the responsibility to administer the institution is not in reality delegated equally to the three elements. He said he did not know how the responsibility should be shared among them.

Professor Chomsky said that she did not want to overstate the case against being a booster of the strategic planning process. It is fine to support the idea of having an effective strategic planning process that actually accomplishes something, she said, but the Committee can't say now that the process will result in a procedurally defensible outcome. All that the Committee can say at this point is that it should be done well, and to review the process to be sure it is sufficiently consultative; it cannot say it will stand behind the result of the process until it sees that it was, in fact, done well. The Committee cannot be in the position of appearing to say that the administration can do whatever it wants to. She agreed that it is not completely clear what is delegated to whom by the Regents' bylaw but that it has to be read in conjunction with the Senate Constitution, which does contain some description of what is delegated to each governing entity. She observed that unlike the implicit split among legislative, executive, and judicial powers in the U.S. government, the legislative power of the University Senate in governing the University is more limited.

Professor Martin said her interpretation of the bylaw is that there must be consultation, although it does not stipulate how much or how often, nor does it mandate a process.

2. Treatment of Athletes

Professor Marshak reported that he, Professor Kane, and Ms. Courtney from the Senate office met with Twin Cities Athletic Director Joel Maturi, Professors Linda Brady, Leo Perry, and Richard Weinberg, and others about the relationship between athletics and academics on the campus. He said he also wished to commend the two athletic committee chairs (Professors Erdman and Perry) and Ms. Courtney on "Touchdown on Campus" as contributing to a very positive feeling on the campus.

The meeting was about perceptions of student-athletes in the classroom and the need for a survey of athletes. There was also discussion of coordinating academic and athletic recruiting (e.g., an athlete who could have gone to an Ivy League school but who came to Minnesota instead because the Ivy League school did not have athletic scholarship funds). Professor Kane related that Mr. Maturi said he

understands the policy barring contact between coaches and instructors about the performance of a particular student, but there is a feeling among some coaches and athletes that athletes are discriminated against when faculty find out a student is an athlete. Some athletes will not, for example, wear letter jackets to class. So they decided to do a survey to obtain data about if and when athletes are discriminated against or treated unfairly. All the evidence thus far is anecdotal; they want to know if something is wrong so they can fix it, she said. Professor Lanyon suggested checking on treatment across colleges.

Professor Balas pointed out that the survey would need to be approved by the IRB.

3. Housing and Residential Life Policies

Housing and residential life policies came up at the pre-FCC meeting with Provost Sullivan the previous week, Professor Marshak recalled, in the context of a discussion of what the University needs to do if it is to be one of the best research universities in the world. What is different in a research university in terms of what it does with students? A research university should foster collaboration, taking risks, self-esteem, and being an adult; in housing, one question is how men and women are assigned to residence halls. On the Twin Cities campus there are separate wings or hallways for men and women (unlike Morris, for example, where the genders are mixed in the same hallway); the literature suggests that the more the opposite gender are mixed, the better is the behavior. Professor Marshak said that he and Mr. Wanderman, the chair of the Student Senate Consultative Committee, are going to meet with the Director of Housing about this issue.

Another issue is the community advisors. Most students in residence halls are first-year students. Some juniors and seniors live in the halls and serve as mentors/peer advisors and also as disciplinarians. This set of responsibilities creates problems for the older students and is not ideal for a world-class university. If older students are to be hired to ensure discipline, perhaps they should not have the dual responsibility of also serving as effective mentors and community builders.

4. The Difference of a Research University

The housing discussion led Professor Sampson to ask about the distinction between a research university and other institutions. Is there an understanding of what the curriculum and pedagogy should be at a research university that will develop skills in students that they could not get at a liberal arts college? Professor Marshak agreed that these are important questions; he said he was simply starting with housing because the issue arose. It was noted that at some institutions, there are academic people who head and live in student housing with the students.

Professor Konstan noted that research universities, which almost by definition must be fairly large, offer fewer one-to-one opportunities than do liberal arts colleges, something that research universities always struggle with. Professor Lanyon commented that the University needs to emphasize what it can offer as part of the undergraduate experience that the liberal arts colleges cannot; it is silly to try to beat liberal arts colleges at their own game. Professor Martin, responding to Professor Sampson's point, said the University needs to inquire if there are things Michigan, Wisconsin, and North Carolina are doing that Minnesota is not. Professor Kleiner observed that one department puts research faculty in undergraduate classes so students learn from someone doing cutting-edge research. Students here learn

more quickly about new research; faculty in liberal arts colleges are not typically leading the research in their fields. Professor Martin said most CLA departments follow that practice.

One thing the University offers is breadth that no small institution can provide, Professor Lanyon said, but the way the University structures the curriculum discourages students from taking advantage of it. There is need to find a way to increase the exposure of students to broad areas. The departments that are accredited (such as in engineering) must have certain things, Professor Balas said, so those departments will look alike across institutions. They also want students to graduate in four years, so there is a tension between Professor Lanyon's point and the requirements and expectations in fields like engineering. Professor Lanyon commented that the University should not be constrained to compete with small liberal arts colleges.

Professor Chomsky reported that the Council on Enhancing Student Learning has been thinking for a couple of years, in connection with the accreditation review of the Twin Cities campus, about what a graduate should know and be able to do. They have committed to taking the issues to the colleges (some are already addressing them). The same questions also come up with respect to graduate and professional education. They are encouraging units to think about what they are doing and modify their practices to meet the education goals. This is a University-wide discussion that will filter down through the colleges, and there will be an effort to develop a rubric that all could support in terms of the curriculum.

Professor Martin said that the competition with liberal arts colleges happens in CLA, and it is getting students who would have gone to the liberal arts colleges. Those students want the variety and the experience of being in a big place rather than a small town. There is a certain amount of self-selection, and there is also much the University cannot do like small liberal arts colleges.

5. Nominees for the Faculty Academic Oversight Committee on Intercollegiate Athletics

Committee members agreed on a list of names of individuals who would be asked to fill the three vacant slots on the Faculty Academic Oversight Committee on Intercollegiate Athletics. Professor Marshak said he would contact them.

6. Update on Research Secrecy Issues

Professor Balas next noted that Committee members had received a copy of a memo from Mr. Bohnhorst in the General Counsel's office explaining the circumstances surrounding one of the recent research secrecy exceptions that had been granted. In the case involving geology research and potential mineral rights, Mr. Bohnhorst feels that there are protections in place to protect the University and landowners. The decision was thoughtfully made, Professor Balas said, and the State will be provided all of the data from the geological research.

Professor Lanyon commented on the required two-year delay in publishing. Is that onerous in the field of geology? In some fields, such a delay would not matter. Professor Balas said he did not know but that the geologists had said it did not matter. Professor Lanyon said that is a key piece: if the normal timeline for publication might be two years, then this exception does not go down a slippery slope; if the delay leads to a substantial delay in discussion in the field, then he would be very concerned.

One argument that has been made in the past is that if the University does not take the money, someone else will, Professor Kane said. She said that is an offensive argument and she hoped it will not be used again.

7. All-University Commencement

Professor Marshak said it has bothered him for the 34 years he has been at the University that most commencements happen before classes and exams are over. He said he has been at commencements at other research universities; the usual style he saw combined an all-University event with a series of smaller college-based commencements. These achieve two disparate goals: (1) an all-University event that showcases students and is a visible demonstration of the academic enterprise, an event that would have a big-name speaker like the President of the United States or the Secretary of State, and (2) a smaller event that provides individual attention to each students in a smaller venue, such as colleges or departments. Professor Marshak said he was enthusiastic about the success of the Convocation and suggested the all-University commencement as an idea to talk about.

Committee members offered several observations.

- There is no facility large enough, before the University builds its on-campus football stadium-to-be. At present CLA requires Northrop Auditorium twice to complete commencement; the Metrodome would be an undesirable location. Moreover, the CLA graduation is already long enough to have to sit through.
- For a number of colleges, only recently have they been trying to nurture graduates as potential donors. The idea of attachment to the college is important, something that might be lost in an all-University event.
- An all-University event should not hand out degrees. Perhaps it could recognize students with the highest honors; it would also include a big-name speaker. The IT graduation is not a good experience—people do not know one another, diplomas are not handed out, and no one congratulates the graduates. It would be better to have departmental graduations, except for small colleges. (But this is Minnesota, it was said in response, and honoring a few but not the rest could cause discomfort, and it is not clear how many people would show up at an all-University event.)
- The idea of "marked moments" when everyone's commencement is celebrated is an attractive idea, if followed by smaller, real "community" events spread over time. Commencement weekend might be not one event but several academic events. At the same time, it is hard to remember anything any commencement speaker ever said. The University of Wisconsin has a rolling commencement weekend that includes top-notch speakers, and everyone knows it is commencement weekend.
- The University has a lot of venues that could be used, if events were spread out over a weekend.
- An all-University event would provide another opportunity to say that this is all the University of Minnesota; one might not want parents and grandparents in the stadium, but the event could bring

all the students together to an event for them, and then have smaller college/department events with parents, etc.

The Committee concluded that it would be worth exploring a single commencement weekend consisting of multiple college events. Professor Marshak indicated he would follow up on this idea with the Provost.

8. Candidates for Administrative Positions

Professor Marshak next recalled that he had been a candidate for the position of Vice Provost for Faculty and Academic Affairs. That raises the question of whether FCC members should be candidates for administrative positions. The major downside to FCC members being candidates for administrative posts is that they will try to "make nice" with the administration while they are candidates. He pointed out that he demonstrated the opposite behavior while a candidate.

This is a policy issue, Professor Martin said. There have been a number of times when the FCC chair had the opportunity to apply for a position. She and several other members of the Committee discussed this issue and believe that there should be a distinction between the FCC Chair and Vice Chair, on the one hand, and FCC members on the other. The Chair and Vice Chair should not apply for administrative posts, she said. It must be very clear that they represent the faculty; once they have applied for an administrative position, representing the faculty becomes more difficult. This should be made clear when someone takes the position.

This is related to the role of this Committee, Professor Feeney said. It is acceptable for FCC members to be candidates for administrative posts, but when the chair is a candidate, there is the appearance of collusion. All faculty governance has is credibility; if it loses that, it is out of business. They have had to deal with this before; he and Professors Martin and Morrison—all former chairs—believe that no FCC chair should be a candidate for any centrally-appointed position (dean or above). Someone serving as FCC chair must either not apply for positions or should resign because the Committee cannot give up the credibility it has.

Professor Lanyon said it is difficult to ask someone to predict whether there will be a position they will be interested in; it would be better say that they cannot apply or must resign if they do.

Professor Balas disagreed. He said he believed in the reputation and honor of Committee members. Who else would he want to be an administrator? Someone from this Committee. Positions come up so rarely; it is overly-stringent to say the FCC chair cannot apply. Perhaps if the individual makes the final slate he or she should resign. Professor Clayton agreed that the chair should not be tied down for the term of office and that it is better for the faculty if the person applies for jobs.

Professor Chomsky pointed out that these are only one-year terms. She said she recalled a sense among the faculty, a few years ago, that all the faculty on FCC wanted to do was get administrative jobs. When FCC members have become administrators, once they have such jobs they do not often speak publicly for the faculty (although they may work behind the scenes). She said she is glad that some former FCC chairs have become administrators, but it is not a good idea to have them considered for the positions during the year they serve as chair. They should say that if they are elected to be chair or vice

chair, they will restrict themselves from applying for administrative positions, or resign the chair position if a position opens up and they want to apply.

There are things the Committee is trying to prevent, Professor Konstan said. The FCC chair should not abuse the position in trying to obtain an administrative position. That is a legitimate concern. Nor does the Committee want someone as chair who wants an opportunity to be dean. The windows of opportunity for such positions are short, however, and if one takes an administrative position just after stepping down as chair, that is just as bad. While a search is going on, the individual should step aside as chair.

Professor Balas said he had a lot more faith in FCC members, although he understood the outside perception. He said he did not believe people would change positions on issues just because they go into the administration. The question is whether one wants the FCC chair running for central administrative office, Professor Feeney said.

If the chair or vice chair applies for a position, he or she should step down, Professor Kane said. Searches are run so that only part of the process is public, Professor Balas noted. Should the person step down when on a short list? If someone applies for a position, the Committee should be informed and the person should step down as chair, Professor Kane maintained.

Professor Chomsky said that conflict-of-interest rules are there because there is both the reality and the appearance of conflict of interest, so that one is not on both sides of an issue. To advise the administration while seeking a position in the administration is a basic conflict of interest. But she said she did not believe the individual should have to resign from the Committee.

The Committee agreed to continue discussing this matter and to consider it again at a future meeting.

9. Closing Committee Meetings to Ex Officio Members

Professor Marshak reported that there had been two requests recently from committee chairs who wished to close a meeting to all but voting members in order to discuss an issue without the presence of administrators. Senate Rules make no provision for excluding ex officio members. One example was a committee chair who wished to have a discussion of candidates for an administrative post—one of the ex officio members of the committee was one of the candidates for the post, so it would not have been possible to have a discussion with that committee member present.

It was agreed that a proposed amendment to the Senate rules should be drafted, allowing a committee to close its meetings to administrative ex officio members at the discretion of the chair. Professor Martin suggested that the purpose of the closed discussion should be listed on the agenda in order to reduce or eliminate any animosity that might otherwise arise.

Professor Marshak adjourned the meeting at 2:15.

-- Gary Engstrand