

## **SENATE COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL CONCERNS**

MINUTES of the MEETING

September 28, 2015

[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 represent the views of, nor are they binding on, the Senate, the Administration or the Board of Regents.]

**[In these minutes:** Review of Charge, BOR Policy Draft American Indian Advisory Boards, Discussion of Potential Agenda Topics]

**PRESENT:** Randy Croce, chair, Kjerstie Wiltzen, Maria Estaquio, Deborah Hendricks, Katie Benson, David Fuhs, Lauren Duckett, Rachel Schurman, Maria del Carmen Garcia de la Serran Lozano, Stuart Mason, Daniel Kelliher

**REGRETS:** Zan Gao, Naomi Scheman, Sandeep Kataria

**GUESTS:** Katrice Albert, vice president, Office for Equity and Diversity

**OTHERS ATTENDING:** Chuck Turchick

**1. Welcome and Introductions:** Randy Croce, chair, welcomed the committee. Committee members introduced themselves and shared areas of interest or expertise that might be relevant to the committee's charge.

**2. Review of Charge:** Croce reviewed the charge with the committee. He also informed members that the committee was due for a review this year by the Committee on Committees.

### **3. Board of Regents (BOR) Policy Draft, American Indian Advisory Boards**

Katrice Albert, vice president, Office for Equity and Diversity, spoke on a revision to the BOR policy on American Indian Advisory Boards. The purpose of the policy revision, she stated, is to strengthen the relationship between the Tribal Nations and the University, and increase the membership and scope of the Advisory Board. While all system campuses may maintain individual advisory boards, Albert felt that a system-wide board should be formed. The revision includes representation from each campus and all eleven federally-recognized Tribal Nations and the inclusion of duties performed by the board.

Albert stated that she has worked on the policy this past year in conjunction with the Tribal Nations, senior leadership at the University, and the chancellor from each system campus, as well as the department of American Indian studies, who are currently reviewing the policy. She wanted the Social Concerns Committee to have a chance to provide input as well, and to provide a vote of confidence for the revision.

Committee members commented that the proposed policy was a considerable improvement over the older policy in that it recognizes the diversity among Native American nations within the state and between reservation and urban communities. It also enables advisory board members to make recommendations directly rather than through the president. When asked for further feedback, committee members raised the following concerns:

- Under Section IV, Subd. 1. Advisory Board Membership: Would other campuses be able to send a representative? Albert stated that representatives a through c under Subd. 1 would be rotating representation so all campuses would have a turn sitting on the board. *The committee recommended clarifying this rotating seat.*
- It appears that at any time during rotation there would only be one student representative on a 21-seat committee. Albert stated that the representative from each campus could be a student as well. She reiterated that the policy intent is to allow the Tribal Nations to have government-to-government relations with the University. The commitment to have student, faculty, and staff representation is secondary to the eleven Tribes having their voices be heard on these contemporary and necessary issues, she said. System Chancellors can appoint students to serve as campus representatives if they so choose, and students could provide feedback through various system campus student groups. *The committee recommends the policy should further clarify the options for student representation on this policy.*
- Section IV, Subd. 2. Does this mean that each Tribal Nation chairperson will nominate a representative? Albert confirmed that each chairperson would nominate a representative and an alternate. *The committee recommends this be clarified.*

Laura Duckett motioned to endorse the policy subject to the clarifications stated above. Rachel Schurman seconded the motion. All were in favor and none opposed. The committee endorsed the policy subject to recommended edits.

## **5. Discussion of Past and Future Topics and Priority Setting**

Croce began by sharing the following handout listing possible issues the committee might consider over the upcoming year.

---

*Note: Issues which the committee agreed to address are starred. Details below.*

### **POTENTIAL ISSUES FOR SOCIAL CONCERNS COMMITTEE 2015-16**

#### **EMPLOYEE ISSUES**

\*1: Supervisors and U subcontractors not abiding by University policies and contracts  
Scheduling Issues –

- Denial of time off for religious holidays
- Denial of earned sick and safe time and bereavement days

\*2: Maternity leave - Parity of Civil Service and bargaining unit employees with P&A and Faculty: two weeks vs. six weeks

- 3: Regents Scholarship – restoration of full benefit
- 4: U compliance with Minneapolis Works policy package expected to be passed by City Council, Fall 2015, including fair scheduling
- 5: Background checks when employees change jobs within University
- 6: Adequate pay levels
- 7: Problems with reclassification – shifts between employee groups with loss of pay and retirement benefits

### **STUDENT ISSUES**

- \*1: Ban the Box [CONT] - application requiring criminal background disclosure
- 2: Disability access – limited schedule of paratransit vans
- 3: Mental health access
- 4: Healthy food options at UDS dorm facilities

### **CAMPUS CLIMATE**

- \*1: Title IX and affirmative consent – sexual assault and harassment
- \*2: Increased and improved signage for tobacco free campus
- 3: Trademark license code of conduct – branded clothing [CONT]
- 4: Clarifying academic freedom and religious freedom vs. hate speech
- \*5: LGBTQ ISSUES
  - \*Gender-neutral bathrooms – expand number, particularly in “deserts” and publicize availability and locations
  - Name preference in classroom rosters and ID cards
  - Gender inclusivity in athletics
- \*6: Support campus climate work group efforts to retain and graduate students of diverse backgrounds
- 7: Commercialization – TCF, UPS, Coke – selling access

### **ENVIRONMENTAL AND NUTRITION ISSUES**

- 1: Fossil fuel divestment [CONT]
- 2: Limit emissions and work toward climate neutrality and sustainability – Presidents’ Climate Commitment 2010
- \*3: University Dining Services and other campus food outlets–
  - Local and nutritious food sourcing
  - \*Reducing waste through recycling and composting – Morris model

---

Croce stated that the list of issues was compiled from a broad constituency including members of the committee, meetings with ex officio members, meetings with leaders of campus union leaders and leaders of the Civil Service and P&A Senates as well as the chairs of some other Senate committees. He thought the following criteria might be used in narrowing down the list of potential future agenda items:

- Is collaboration with other Senate committees possible?
- Is the issue inherently important? How urgent is the issue?
- Does it fall under the purview of the charge?
- Who are the stakeholders and how might this committee collaborate with them?

- Do we have interest, expertise, and passion to assure follow through?
- Do we think we can achieve resolution or significant progress over the course of the year?

The discussion revolved around a belief that the University should be a standard-bearer for the larger society; that the committee should be working on issues that sit at the intersection of the University and the broader community. Committee members felt that some of the EMPLOYEE ISSUES seem to deal with employee policy, and perhaps fall under the purview of another Senate committee. The following issues were brought forward as possible topics for the committee to address:

- Issue # 1 under EMPLOYEE ISSUES, denial of leaves: Employees in some divisions are being denied time off for paid sick leave and for religious holidays. Croce stated that in talks with other Senate committees, he was told this affects civil service employees, P&A employees, and bargaining units. This is not a policy issue but rather an issue of policy not being followed. The committee expressed interest in following up on this issue.
- Issue #2 under EMPLOYEE ISSUES, parental leave disparity: The committee felt that this issue was a tangible, manageable issue of concern for the University community, especially given that most day care providers will not provide care for children less than six weeks old. A committee member mentioned that, given our medical and health units at the University, it makes sense to address this issue as a public health issue. She further stated that issues of parental leave touch the entire University community, and perhaps the concern is larger than just civil service employees. This committee could advise policy on the ramifications of inadequate parental leave. *ACTION: Pursue this issue and also see if the Benefits Advisory Committee has plans to address this issue.*
- Issue #1 under STUDENT ISSUES, ban the box: The committee agreed that application language discouraging potential students from applying to the University and the biases inherent in who might not apply is a serious issue. Since, the University did respond to concerns by revising the form, the committee decided to wait and see how the new undergraduate application has affected admissions and review whatever other information was generated by a study of that change. (The question regarding an applicant's criminal history was altered to ask specifically about felony convictions and criminal sexual conduct.) If necessary, the committee will address this issue later in the year when more information is available, in collaboration with the Student Senate, which raised the issue.
- Issue #2 under STUDENT ISSUES, paratransit services: Megan Sweet, assistant to the vice provost, Office for Student Affairs, stated that the area appearing to be underserved is the area immediately surrounding campus, rather than on campus. The question was asked as to whether the University Paratransit Services could be expanded. Kjerstie Wilzen stated that Student Senate discussed this last year and that there are limited stops that Paratransit will make off campus. *It was decided that the Disabilities Issues Committee should lead action on this issue.*
- Issue #3 under STUDENT ISSUES, mental health: The committee agreed this topic was too broad to appropriately or successfully address at this time and

progress is being made in this area; however the committee is willing to help support Student Senate efforts if they seek assistance.

- Issue #4 under STUDENT ISSUES, healthy dorm food: The committee decided to let the Student Senate take the lead on this issue.
- Issue #1 under CAMPUS CLIMATE, sexual assault and harassment: Maria Estaquio, associate to the director, Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action, stated that her office investigates reports related to Title IX. She said they have been working on the policies associated with Title IX, and that Affirmative Consent Policy is now its own policy. Concern was expressed over the fact that it's not primarily a policy issue, but rather a campus climate issue. The committee felt that the appropriate policies exist but informing and educating the larger University community about the policies is where the breakdown occurs. Estaquio stated that the office for Equity and Diversity offers training on a variety of issues related to Title IX, and that first year students are all required to attend orientation around affirmative consent. Both policies were amended and voted on very recently.

It was agreed by the committee that Policy is the first step and Education is the second step. A third step would be to assess the gap between policy and behavior. Perhaps there are ways to cooperate with other Senate committees to have wider fora about the various Title IX-related issues and policies. *ACTION: Estaquio, Croce, Sweet, and Schurman will refine the issue, frame an approach the committee might take, and bring it back for discussion.*

Issue #2 under CAMPUS CLIMATE, tobacco free campus: The policy already exists, but Tina Falkner, chair of the Benefits Advisory Committee, asked for support for more signage to inform the campus about the smoking ban. Committee members agreed that there are compliance problems and decided to support the BAC education effort.

- Issue # 3 under CAMPUS CLIMATE: Assuring that trademarked items sold by the University are not made in sweatshops. The University is part of an organization that assures items sold at the University are not produced in sweatshops, but some individuals want more restrictive measures. Croce believes this issue needs more research and will report back to the committee.
- Issue #4 under CAMPUS CLIMATE: The concern with this item involved figuring out when academic freedom crosses the line into harassment. No conclusion was provided on this issue, the committee deciding that the issue needs to be more narrowly defined to address it.
- Issue # 5 under CAMPUS CLIMATE, gender-neutral restrooms: Other Senate committees are interested in this as well. Croce stated that Facilities Management says 100 bathrooms on this campus are now gender-neutral and over 200 more single user restrooms have been identified that could be converted to gender-neutral status. The committee agreed to work on this issue in collaboration with other Senate committees. Another issue under #5 concerned students who choose a preferred name over their legal name. The committee believes that this is already starting to occur. Students can now use a preferred name for name badges and rosters. Croce also brought up the issue of gender inclusivity in athletics. It

was decided that discussion of gender inclusivity should be postponed until Jayne Blodgett can participate in the discussion.

- Issue #6 under CAMPUS CLIMATE: How do we influence the campus climate such that we retain faculty of color and admit more students of color? The committee agreed this is an issue of concern that needs to be addressed further at a later meeting.
- Issue #1 under ENVIRONMENTAL AND NUTRITION ISSUES, fossil fuel divestment: The Student Senate is also interested in this issue. Croce stated that the University is already not invested in any coal, and University investments are part of a larger portfolio that doesn't allow for more choice in specific industry investments. Fully divesting of all fossil fuels will cost the University a significant amount in fees annually, as it would require shifting funds to significantly more expensive managed plans. The committee, after discussing unproductive efforts in previous years, decided this was not an issue to address at this time.
- Issue #3 under ENVIRONMENTAL AND NUTRITION ISSUES: The committee decided to focus on the waste reduction aspect of this topic. The concern is that there are, according to one committee member, "all these separated bins all over [the campus] and we still have newspapers in the garbage." It was shared that the St. Paul campus recently had a pilot composting program but no one knows how effective these efforts were. Lozano and Sweet expressed interest in exploring this topic. It was suggested that the organization Zero Waste be contracted to help with events. Action: *Croce will speak with Facilities Management and University Dining Services, as well as someone on the Morris campus to see what has been effective in mitigating waste and perhaps see if they might speak at a future meeting.*

It should be understood, even when not specifically stated, that other committees will be consulted on many of these issues. Due to time constraints, the meeting was adjourned.

PATRICIA STRAUB  
University Senate Office