

## **SENATE COMMITTEE ON STUDENT AFFAIRS (SCSA)**

November 18, 2015

Minutes of the Meeting

*[These minutes reflect discussion and debate at a meeting of a committee of the University Senate; none of the comments, conclusions, or actions reported in these minutes represents the view of, nor are they binding on the Senate, the Administration, or the Board of Regents.]*

**[In these minutes:** Real Food Challenge; Upgrade Feedback]

**PRESENT:** Peter Haeg (chair), Matthew Loomis, Kat Yushchenko, Thomas Bilder, Xinran Duan, Lin Liu, Jethro Land, Lisa Erwin, Michael Stebleton, Kari Volkmann-Carlsen, Nicholas Goldsmith, Kendre Turonie, Kyle Kroll, David Blank, Susan Mantell

**REGRETS:** Jillian Ryks, Patricia Jones Whyte

**ABSENT:** Ellii Bipes, Rebecca Houske, Cecelia Stevens, Nitish Mittal

**GUESTS:** Sue Van Voorhis, director, Academic Support Resources; Julie Selander, director, One Stop Student Services; Evelina Knodel and Karen Weldon, Real Food Challenge representatives

**1. Real Food Challenges:** Peter Haeg, chair, opened the meeting by introducing Evelina Knodel and Karen Weldon, who were attending to present information on the Real Food Challenge (RFC), a student organization of over 300 universities nationwide organizing for a more just and sustainable food system in dining halls. Knodel and Weldon said that the real food challenge asks campuses to commit to having 20% of their food purchasing dollars come from local and community based, ecologically sound sources by 2020.

Weldon said that in their efforts, the group has formulated the following goals:

- Develop a food policy and action plan.
- Create a food systems working group.
- Establish a transparent reporting system.
- Increase awareness about real food.

She said the University is already working to be more sustainable, and is also now using a real food calculator. In September they assessed Fresh Food Company dining in the 17<sup>th</sup> Ave. Residence Hall and learned that 7% of all food was real food while 1% was local. When asked what are the criteria for a food being identified as real, Weldon provided the following list. She said the food must fall in to at least one of the following categories:

- Ecologically sound - certified by one of several organizations as organic or grown at the University under organic practices.
- Fair - certified by one of several certification standards, such as Fair Trade.
- Humane - certified by one of several organizations including Animal Welfare Approved or AGA Grassfed.

- Local and Community based - privately-traded or cooperatively owned, produced, processed, and distributed within 250 miles of where it would be consumed.

Knodel said that their work on the Real Food Challenge began in earnest in Spring 2015, when they worked to pass the Real Food Campus Commitment. Over the past summer and fall semester they worked to engage students and the community. They have gathered over 2500 signatures and have met with Aramark, with the Director of Sustainability, the Minneapolis Food Council, MSA Real Food Committee, and Minnesota Young Food Professionals. They have also met with the president, she added, and will begin research in Spring 2016 on the 17<sup>th</sup> Ave. Dining Hall, where they hope to see the % of real food increase.

Susan Mantell asked about the cost of food and how an institution can balance cost with sustainability, that they appear to have no goal for cost. Weldon replied that cost conversations would happen in the contract and policy negotiations, not at this time. Kyle Kroll asked for an example of how much more expensive a real food item would be as compared to a non real food item. Weldon said that it could fluctuate. For instance, black beans grown locally were cheaper than those grown elsewhere. Knodel added that there is no concrete data yet that supports cost benefits one way or the other. She said organic can sometimes be more expensive, but it really does depend on where you get the products. Weldon added that some of the universities started with a goal of 20 % and are now at 40%, and that perhaps those universities might be able to provide some data.

Knodel said the short growing season in Minnesota has been a real concern of theirs. But they were pleased to get 110 bushels of local apples this fall for the dining halls and that was a great push on their part. They have also been pushing for grass-fed beef at TCF Stadium and perhaps in the dining halls as well.

Jethro Land stated that he did not see any colleges on the list of those participating that are as large as the University of Minnesota, and that it would be important to do a statistical analysis on cost increase per meal. Mantell agreed, and said there should be some commitment from Aramark on what increases to meal plans might be. Weldon stated that their hope is to not raise meal cost.

When Weldon and Knodel asked the committee who else they might talk to about their efforts, Kat Yushchenko said there was a food justice class that may be interested. She added that Aramark is somewhat controversial, as they have investments in private prisons. Kroll thought that perhaps the School of Public Health would have a student group that would be interested. Other committee members mentioned Professor Mike White in CFANS, the Institute on Environment, and local co-ops as a source for data and supply chains.

**2. Upgrade Feedback:** Sue Van Voorhis, director, Academic Support Resources and Julie Selander, director, One Stop Student Services provided information on the Upgrade process and feedback loop as it had affected students. Van Voorhis started with a review of the Upgrade goals, which are as follows:

- Reduce risk.
- Operational excellence.

- Change driven by operational need (system no longer supported) not technology.
- Enterprise focus on change management and communications.

Van Voorhis said that in 1998, the University wrote all the pieces of the system that affected students, including class search, registration, and financial aid packages. Every time they customized the software each of those pieces had to be tested and retested. The University had customized to the point where PeopleSoft, the software vendor, refused to visit campus to help with any bugs. The system, she said, was too personalized.

At the point of the Upgrade, she said, it made sense to be less customized because:

- Customization requires development and testing.
- Customization increases ongoing costs.
- Customization is a poor long-term strategy – it often causes unforeseen problems down the road.

Selander then talked about some of the performance issues that have come up since the Upgrade occurred. She shared that users included 41% undergraduate students, 7% graduate students, 7% employee graduate students, and 22% employee undergraduate students. She said they had a 25% error rate the first week of the term. Some of the most common issues during the start of the term included:

- Blank page when logging in.
- Periods of system instability.
- 7 MyU Outages.
- 1600+ tickets logged.
- Complaints of pop up blockers causing access issues.

One Stop experienced a 15% increase in traffic during the week prior to the start of classes, Selander said. The staff answered 6058 calls and welcomed 6566 walk-ins. She said most of the questions were about how the system works. She said her staff has been told that students like what they are seeing as they use the new system.

Selander said they held 172 sessions in the Usability Sessions during the implementation period before they went live. Of those, 30-45% were with students. They added six more student sessions in September. The feedback they heard at the sessions was as follows:

- Search functionality needs to be cleaner.
- Notifications could be more prominent.
- Logout timing was problematic.
- Better consistency needed between MyU and Self Service pages.

Van Voorhis said they are aware that the class search function is difficult and they are working on gathering feedback this fall. They have also sent a survey out and will pull all information and feedback together after they've been through at least one registration cycle.

Other feedback they have heard:

- Students do not like the look of the course listing because it shows dropped courses. She said that students are not aware that there is a filter they can use to show whatever they want to show.
- Student would like to export their schedule to Google calendar.
- Links on bottom are difficult to find.
- Moodle links are difficult to find. (They have now created links right to the course in Moodle.)
- Student job search: It's difficult searching for new student jobs. (The Office of Human Resources has now tweaked it so that students can search only for student listings.)

Students can go to [onestop.umn.edu/howto](http://onestop.umn.edu/howto) to access a number of guides for how to perform processes, and more guides are coming, said Selander. She also said that students can visit [z.umn.edu/searchfeedback](http://z.umn.edu/searchfeedback) to provide additional feedback.

Van Voorhis then asked the committee for questions and comments, and received the following:

- Susan Mantell wondered if, when looking at classes at the administrative level, there was any plan to look at all the sections in the department. Van Voorhis replied that yes, they are still getting feedback, and have worked with Tom Shield; at this point any change would be solely for the Twin Cities Campus.
- Lisa Carpenter asked how other campuses have been involved in providing feedback. Van Voorhis said that all campuses received a survey to solicit information on the class and course tools. She said Carla Boyd, registrar, Duluth campus, has solicited feedback from the campus. She added that all registrars meet weekly and are involved in this project.
- Kroll said that the Professional Student Group (PSG) discussed the class search function, and how it would be better with the ability to search by themes or specific categories. For example, he said, if someone wanted to search for all classes that fulfilled their legal writing requirement classes they could do that. Van Voorhis said that it might be possible if they could create tags that would group those classes together. In lieu of that, students could perform a key word search function.
- Yushchenko thought the accessibility format for the search was very inaccessible and had a lot of glitches. For instance, she said, sometimes it requires you to reload a page, and graphics jump around. Selander thanked her for the feedback and said they work closely with the Disability Resource Center on the design of the page.
- Kroll wondered if the cascading style sheet could be made to look nicer. He said the blue pages look odd and that students would react differently if the design were nicer and more consistent. Van Voorhis said that PeopleSoft chose blue because it is supposed to be soothing. And, she added, the code was written not by one developer but by many people around the country, which is why it's not quite consistent. Her

office has submitted requests to the company to make these aesthetic changes where possible, but other things are higher on the list.

Haeg thanked Van Voorhis and Selander for coming. Hearing no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Patricia Straub  
University Senate Office