

Minutes*

Senate Committee on Educational Policy
Wednesday, September 20, 1995
Fall Retreat
8:30 - 2:30
Holiday Inn North

Present: Laura Koch (chair), Avram Bar-Cohen, Anita Cholewa, Elayne Donahue, Gayle Graham Yates, Darwin Hendel, Jeffrey Larsen, Judith Martin, William Van Essendelft

Regrets: Megan Gunnar, Robert Johnson, Glenn Merkel, Ryan Nilsen, Mark Schuller

Absent: Thomas Johnson, Helen Phin

Guests: Acting Vice President and Acting Dean Mark Brenner; Provost W. Phillips Shively

[In these minutes: Possible improvements to undergraduate education; role of the Graduate School; issues for the year; policy review]

Professor Koch convened the retreat at 8:30, welcomed everyone, and called for a round of introductions. She thereupon turned to Provost Shively for a discussion of issues related to undergraduate education.

1. Discussion with Provost W. Phillips Shively

Provost Shively began the discussion by distributing two handouts, one a list of possible improvements in undergraduate education and the other a proposal to recognize Morse-Alumni award winners and McKnight Land-Grant Professors. The latter is a suggestion for a Senate policy providing that all faculty members who have been Morse-Alumni award winners, since its inception, be entitled to designate themselves "Morse-Alumni Distinguished Teaching Professor of [field]." The title could be used in correspondence, on business cards, and so on. Faculty who have been awarded McKnight Land-Grant professorships shall be entitled to designate themselves as "McKnight Land-Grant Professor of [field]."

Committee members reacted very positively to this proposal and agreed to take it up at the first business meeting of the Committee, on September 27.

Dr. Shively then began reviewing the items on the list of possible improvements to undergraduate education; he cautioned that these are ideas, at this point, and most have not been worked out in any detail. They include, in no order of importance:

-- Instruction of graduate students in how to teach; there will be a President's Forum on this subject.

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- A second round of "large introductory class" improvements; it is time for an evaluation of the first round and consideration of a second. One part of this might be the calculus project, a proposal to NSF to broaden and revitalize calculus instruction.
- An "internal extension agency" to bring research on teaching and learning to the faculty and teaching assistants; this was recommended by the Campbell Committee and is to modeled on the Minnesota Extension Service. It might consist of two faculty and to graduate students to follow the teaching and learning literature and make it known to the faculty.
- Tuition waivers (or other incentives) for National Merit Scholars.
- Instruction in writing; this is a very high priority. Dr. Shively said he "would be damned if I'll leave the Provost's office without putting something in place to help University students write well."
- Simplification of student choices; better information (e.g., a single catalogue for the Twin Cities campus). Creating a single bulletin and ending dual registration in CEE and Day School would be examples of how students could be helped.
- Recasting of advising (after the previous item, simplification of student choices, is accomplished). Much of what advisors do is untie knots that the University ties for the student. Advising offices deal with knot-handling, which is the reason the faculty are NOT doing advising--the University does not WANT faculty to have to take the time to know all the technical information students need. They could if it were better structured.
- Redesign the course access program. This has solved 80% of the problem of students frozen out of courses they need. Funds have been added to this program each year.
- Establish an all-University or all-Twin Cities honors program for the first two years. This would be a great recruiting device for good students. There are several things that could be done: offer special courses restricted to honors students, with very good teachers; link it to the University Scholars program, an intellectually-oriented co-curricular program; and work with college honors programs.
- Establishment of a "distinguished undergraduate faculty," one that not all could be in, parallel to the graduate faculty. In most undergraduate areas, almost all faculty would have to belong; many professional school faculty might prefer NOT to belong to it. There would need to be commitment by the faculty, along with perks, to get the first-rate faculty to become members.
- Expand the Residential College program. It would be extremely desirable to expand it to include a range of colleges, not just CLA and IT.
- Harden funding for the Bush faculty support program. This has been a successful program, now in its sixth year.

Committee members discussed these items with Drs. Brenner and Shively at some length. Another item that arose in the discussion was establishment of a freshman orientation/writing course; Dr. Shively reported that a small group from the University intends to investigate the reportedly outstanding program at the University of South Carolina.

2. Discussion with Acting Vice President and Acting Dean Mark Brenner

Professor Koch next asked Dr. Brenner to discuss the status of the Graduate School. Dr. Brenner reported that the Graduate School has been challenged to present the value-added it gives to the institution; its future is yet to be resolved. He presented a series of slides to the Committee; the major points about the Graduate School were these:

- It is an advocate for quality in graduate programs: it articulates a vision of excellence for the graduate community, it defines the principles and scope for graduate education, it brings an institution-wide perspective to all post-baccalaureate endeavors, it provides review and control mechanisms for graduate education admissions and standards to maximize quality, it assures equity for student progress across all academic disciplines, it distributes fellowship funds such that they go to the highest quality students and programs, it assumes leadership in graduate education for diversity issues, it serves as an advocate for issues and constituencies critical to the success of graduate programs, and it provides a specialized database for prospective and retrospective analyses of all the graduate programs.
- It is an advocate for quality in the student experience: it provides a uniform and standardized process for application to and graduation from the University, it serves as an advocate for graduate education, it emphasizes the institution-wide importance of training future college and university teachers, and it supports and furthers the non-academic interests and diversity in the graduate student population.
- It champions faculty development: it provides a cross-university perspective in research and education, and it enhances the intellectual community of faculty scholars.

Dr. Brenner then noted the experiences of other institutions with centralized and decentralized graduate education.

Committee members discussed the role of the Graduate School at length with Drs. Brenner and Shively.

Professor Koch thanked Dr. Brenner and Dr. Shively for joining the retreat.

3. Issues for the Year

Professor Koch next reviewed with Committee members a list of the major issues the Committee might take up during the year. The list is as follows:

- *1. SCEP will be bringing to FCC a packet consisting of: current policies, revised policies and new policies all of which need to be acted upon by the Senate. SCEP has spent a good part of the last 9

months reviewing Senate educational policies and attempting to put them together in a coherent package.

- *2. Issues related to semesters would include, but not be limited to:
 - a. CLE requirements
 - b. credit equivalents (3,4 or 5)
 - c. transfer students
 - d. allocation of resources for faculty time
 - e. revision of relevant Senate policies
 - f. discussions with Peter Zetterberg
3. Role of SCEP on:
 - a. the SCEP subcommittee on ROTC
 - b. intercollegiate athletics
4. Review of Bush Sabbatical rules/changes with semesters
5. Integration of various types of classes (day, summer, CEE, independent study) under U2000
6. Report on University College/the Graduate School
7. Classroom availability and scheduling; report on classroom management and upgrading
8. Recruitment, retention and service for transfer students
- *9. Possible development of policy related to the preparation of faculty and TAs for teaching
10. Budget issues: How much money is allocated for education to/by the departments/colleges/centrally? Does the University know how it is spending its education dollars (not just 0100 funds)? Is it enough to improve classroom instruction?
11. The interface between SCEP and the reorganized University administration; should there be representatives on SCEP from each of the colleges? provostal/chancellor units?
12. Report on progress and implementation of Council on Liberal Education requirements
- *13. Report on teaching evaluation policy; discussion of inclusion of adjunct faculty and teaching assistants
14. Update on the residential college
15. What is the "academic core" of the University? What are "favored departments"? What are the educational policy implications of identifying the "academic core" and having "favored departments"?
- *16. Prepare a policy that would give the title "Morse Alumni Distinguished Teaching Professor" to all

past and future winners of the HTM - Minnesota Alumni Association Award for Outstanding Contributions to Undergraduate Education.

17. Review guidelines of honors programs in each of the colleges that offer honors programs
- *18. Issues related to privacy for both students and faculty:
 - a. posting of grades
 - b. students' rights in tape-recorded class sessions
 - c. faculty rights to audio- or video-taped class sessions
- *19. Use of the word "Christmas" on the University calendar
20. Horace T. Morse Award changes
21. Review and continued discussions of Critical Measures
- *22. Report on Teaching and Learning - discussed 94-95, but needs to be brought to the Senate
23. External professional masters degrees
24. Use of technology
25. North Central Accreditation review (the site visit will be May 13-15, 1996)

* These may come to the Senate Consultative Committee and then taken to the Senate for action

Committee members discussed the issues, and then voted on which ones they believed most important. Professor Koch promised to have them on the agenda during the year.

4. Policy Review

Professor Koch then drew the attention of Committee members to the list of policies that the Committee began work on last year and that several members of the Committee had been working on over the summer.

The Committee reached conclusions on the "Uniform Grade and Honor Point System" (a revision of the grading policy), "Policy on Degrees with Distinction and Degrees with Honors," and "Policy on Classes, Schedules, and Final Examinations" and agreed they should be forwarded to the Senate Consultative Committee for placement on the Senate docket.

The Committee deliberated further on the "Policy on Required Syllabus" (and agreed that there should be a more general policy on responsibilities of students and faculty in the classroom) and the "Policy Statement: Faculty Role in Advising." Agreement was reached about which members of the Committee would be responsible for redrafting other policies on the list and that all drafts would be due to the Committee by the first week in December.

Professor Koch then thanked everyone for attending the retreat and adjourned it at 2:30.

-- Gary Engstrand

University of Minnesota