

Minutes*

**Senate Committee on Educational Policy
October 12, 1989**

Present: John Clark (chair), Laura Bobick, John Clausen, Jean Congdon, Roland Guyotte, Karen Karni, Marvin Mattson, Timothy Mazzoni, J. Kim Munholland, Gary Nelsestuen, Gary Parnes, Julie Peterson, Jennifer Wesson

Guests: Lesley Cafarelli, Marjorie Cowmeadow

1. Introductions and Welcome

Professor Clark welcomed Committee members to the first regular meeting and called for a round of introductions.

2. Minutes

The minutes from the Fall Retreat were approved as written.

3. Appointment to CEE Advisory Committee and Liberal Education Task Force

Professor Clark called to the attention of Committee members the request from CEE Dean Hal Miller that SCEP designate a representative to an advisory committee which will oversee the designation of a computerized registration system for CEE. Professor Clark said he would appoint a representative if no Committee member expressed an interest.

Professor Clark explained that service on the Task Force on Liberal Education would probably extend over a two-year period and that the likely emphasis of the work of the Task Force would be curricular. He asked Committee members for nominations; a number of names were proposed and will be forwarded to the Senate Consultative Committee.

4. Senate Action, Hour to Credit Ratio

Professor Clark reviewed the history of the development of the resolution. It called for, as general University policy, a 1:1 ratio between class hours per week and credits awarded for a course (e.g., a class which met three times a week would be worth three credits for a quarter). The proposed policy had been presented to the Senate for information last Spring and is to be on the docket of the Fall Senate meeting for action. Professor Clark suggested that the Committee should carry the motion to the Senate; while he would be glad to serve as spokesperson for SCEP, others on the Committee should also plan on speaking to it as well.

The Committee was informed that the chair of the Consultative Committee, Professor Ibele,

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

would be interested in having SCC take another look at the proposal and act as co-sponsor to it.

Committee members spoke again, briefly, to the merits and drawbacks to the proposal (course work varies by discipline and different fields should not legislate for each other; some will say the Senate does not or should not have the authority to set such a policy; that fairness requires there be consistency among courses in terms of class or contact hours; that the statement allows room for variance with reasonable justification and after thoughtful consideration; accountability for the proposal, if adopted, would rest primarily with college curriculum committees).

5. SCEP agenda for the year

Professor Clark said he had laid out the draft agenda only in order to provide a starting point for discussion. He proposed that the full Committee meet only once a month and that subcommittees meet on the alternative dates which have been scheduled for SCEP. The topics he suggested were: Morse-Alumni Awards, a survey of faculty/students on educational policy issues, separation of graduate and undergraduate students in 5-XXX courses, inquiry into the need for a policy governing grade changes after grades have been awarded, the use of the "D" grade to meet prerequisites, exploration of calendar variations (but not to include conversion to semesters), standards for honors programs and credits, ROTC, TA training, a policy on review of undergraduate programs, the Task Force on Liberal Education, the educational environment, impact of the \$200,000 to improve large introductory courses, internationalization of instruction, emphasis on education beyond the 4-year model, and an annual report to the Senate.

Dr. Lesley Cafarelli from Educational Development Programs made a few comments to Committee members about items which would likely be forthcoming from her office, including a review of the office itself and use of faculty development funds from the Bush Foundation.

After considerable discussion, the Committee finally concluded that it would adopt as its theme for the year, in all its ramifications, the improvement of undergraduate education. The Committee concluded it had to look at the big picture, but in doing so it could examine and recommend improvements in a number of areas. There was agreement, however, that its work should not be in bits and pieces nor on the margins of educational improvement. Its theme should include TA training, grading policy, quality of instruction.

The Committee ruminated about the definition of a high-quality undergraduate education and speculated about the wisdom of surveying faculty and students for views on what issues it should address in trying to improve undergraduate education. No conclusions were reached.

6. Organization

Professor Clark expressed his view that certain subcommittees were necessary to the accomplishment of the SCEP agenda: There must be a calendar committee (to set the calendar as well as examine it), an ROTC committee (to pass on appointments to the faculty), a Morse-Alumni committee (to recommend award-winners to SCEP).

There has been a request that the professional school faculty be made eligible for the Morse-

Alumni Awards (which at present are to be given for improvements in undergraduate education). The Committee concluded that if professional school faculty taught undergraduates, they would be eligible as the award is now defined; the Committee declined to expand the award to include professional schools (which are primarily "post-undergraduate" educational programs; the faculty in those which are not are currently eligible for the award). The Committee agreed that if awards were not currently in existence, the professional schools should be encouraged to devise awards for excellence in teaching.

Professor Clark observed that since undergraduate education had been adopted as the theme of SCEP for the year, the additional subcommittees to be established would focus on various elements of that theme. At the end of the year there would presumably be developed a series of recommendations on what should be done. It was also agreed that SCEP would not address the question of the undergraduate curriculum, inasmuch as the Task Force on Liberal Education would be taking that matter up.

Committee members were asked to think about areas in which they would be interested in working; Professor Clark would circulate a list prior to the next meeting and would thereafter make appointments to appropriate subcommittees.

The Committee agreed that it would want a joint meeting with the Task Force on Liberal Education early on in the deliberations of the Task Force so that the agendas of the two groups could be kept distinct and so that the two could be kept apprised of each other's work.

The Committee adjourned at 4:50.

-- Gary Engstrand

University of Minnesota