

Minutes*

**Senate Committee on Educational Policy
Fall Retreat
Thursday, September 10, 1998
8:00 – 12:00
Radisson Metrodome**

Present: Judith Martin (chair), Darwin Hendel, Gordon Hirsch, Robert Johnson, Laura Coffin Koch, Robert Leik, Jeff Ratliff-Crain, Palmer Rogers, Richard Skaggs, Thomas Soulen, Craig Swan

Guests: Vice Provost Ann Hill Duin

[In these minutes: distance education; graduate education issues; undergraduate education issues]

Professor Martin convened the meeting at 8:00, welcomed everyone, and called for a round of introductions. She briefly outlined the agenda for the meeting.

1. Distance Education/the Minnesota Virtual University

Professor Martin turned to Vice Provost Duin to lead a discussion of the Minnesota Virtual University (MnVU), distance education, and technology-enhanced education.

Vice Provost Duin distributed materials describing several activities taking place with respect to MnVU and distance education. Several questions arose in the discussion. What is the appropriate role of the faculty in MnVU? What are faculty prepared to give up in order to invest time in it? How should those involved talk with the faculty? How should the University think about distance education, and how and where to put money into it? Where does it sit in institutional priorities? How should faculty be rewarded with respect to activities with respect to MnVU and distance education? Is MnVU and distance education being imposed, something outside the governance system? How can grass-roots discussion be encouraged?

It was agreed that a small subcommittee, chaired by Professor Koch, would take up these matters and report back to SCEP with recommendations.

2. Issues of Graduate Education and the Graduate School

Professor Martin next welcomed Associate Dean Robert Leik back to his last meeting, and last day as Associate Dean, to discuss issues related to graduate education and the Graduate School.

Professor Leik set forth for the Committee, in the course of conversation with those present, several issues. They included: (1) problems with IMG in financial support for interdisciplinary programs (especially those that cross college lines); (2) the increase in the number of programs, the lack of control

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over the number, and the inability of the University to discontinue programs, how to treat "little" programs and the use of numeric measures as guidelines; what opportunities that must be preserved for students to return to finish a degree once a program has been discontinued; (3) the relationship between professional Masters programs and Ph.D. programs (i.e., student transfer between them); (4) the criteria or principles for determining when a professional Masters program should be in the Graduate School and when it should not; (5) the need for an internal review process for interdisciplinary professional Masters and other interdisciplinary programs (what happens to students? who advises them? how are the programs evaluated?); (6) the need for a University voice back to disciplinary accrediting agencies (to respond to what are seen as excessive requirements); and (7) the establishment of joint bachelors-masters 5-year programs (in general, and specifically, will courses count double?)

The Committee agreed to forward these issues to Dean Christine Maziar and to schedule a series of discussions with her about these and whatever other matters she may wish to raise.

3. Issues of Undergraduate Education

Professor Martin next asked Vice Provost Swan to itemize those matters within his domain that would come before the Committee. Dr. Swan identified work in progress on development of data for the subcommittee on grading, conversion to semesters, the implications of the new K-12 learning standards and the possible need for joint work with MnSCU on revisions to the preparation standards, the Academy of Distinguished Teachers and the award for outstanding contributions to graduate/professional education, and freshman seminars.

4. Agenda

In its concluding hour, the Committee identified the issues to be taken up during the year, who would be responsible for each of them, and a possible schedule of when they would be addressed. Several subcommittees were appointed.

Professor Martin thanked everyone for coming, and adjourned the meeting at noon.

-- Gary Engstrand