

Minutes\*

**Senate Committee on Educational Policy**  
**Wednesday, November 29, 1995**  
**1:00 - 5:00**  
**Room 626 Campus Club**

Present: Laura Koch (chair), Avram Bar-Cohen, Anita Cholewa, Elayne Donahue, Megan Gunnar, Thomas Johnson, Judith Martin, Glenn Merkel, Ryan Nilsen, Helen Phin, Mark Schuller, William Van Essendelft

Regrets: Gayle Graham Yates, Robert Johnson

Absent: Paul Cleary, Jeffrey Larsen

Guests: Senior Vice President E. F. Infante; Sam Lewis (Registrar); Assistant Vice President Paul Tschida (Campus Health and Safety)

Others: none

[In these minutes: Grading policy revisions, grade inflation; semesters, the State Fair, and the St. Paul campus; revised semester conversion standards for Senate discussion; (with Dr. Infante:) communication about policy changes, semester conversion standards]

**1. Grading Policy**

Professor Koch convened the meeting at 1:07 and welcomed University Registrar Sam Lewis to the meeting to discuss a proposed amendment to the grading policy that has been presented to the Senate. [The amendment called for the inclusion, on transcripts, of the mean grade in a course and the number of students in the course.]

Mr. Lewis said his office had a lot of questions about the change in the transcript with respect to how it would be implemented. They have looked at what would need to be done to the student data base to change the transcript in this way, and grading and courses are at the heart of the data base. They have identified at least 30 separate tasks to change the current system; the cost, at a wild guess, would be about \$500,000, in addition to ongoing operating costs of \$100,000 to \$150,000. In addition, since their staff is going to be committed to the semester conversion, they would not be able to make these changes immediately. Finally, as the student data base systems are being replaced, he said they are being encouraged not to develop their own systems but instead to buy packages off the shelf. There is no package on the market that would provide these data, so the University would have to enhance whatever system it purchased.

At present, he explained, when a student requests a transcript, the GPA is calculated at that time;

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they do not store GPAs in the memory. Everything is done dynamically in order to reflect the most current information (which is one of the greatest changes made to the system, he added; before this, there were only monthly updates, which often meant students could not get current transcripts). The proposed amendment would call for another calculation to be made for each transcript, making production expensive and possibly slower and more difficult for students.

Is there, he asked, an easier way to get at the concern of the Committee? Several points were made in the following discussion.

- This was seen as an alternative to pushing faculty to grade on the curve. What about reporting the median grade, which need not be a dynamic calculation? An A grade when the median is a B+ is different from an A when the median is a C. Mr. Lewis thought that might be less expensive and said he would explore the possibility.
- The initial reason for the proposed amendment to the grading policy was to get at faculty who are too lenient in grading; why should there be an entry on transcripts, which faculty do not see?
- The basic argument is that faculty should have to explain their grades; sometimes all high grades may be sensible, while in other cases there will be no adequate explanation. Does this mean every quarter every faculty member must meet with the department head to explain grades? Why not leave it to the departments? Because there has been massive grade inflation.
- There was no significant change in the high school rank of incoming students, 1982-1990, that might account for the inflation of graduates' GPAs, 1987-1995. It may be that only better students graduate, but retention rates changed only very slightly during that period.
- Should there be a University policy, there shall be no grade inflation? Yes, this is very important; the faculty gives into pressure to inflate grades. In evaluating applicants for graduate school, for example, there has been both grade inflation--rending the transcript worth little--and inflation of letters of recommendation, which means departments must rely on a single number, the GRE. Need it be official policy? Nothing has been accomplished any other way.
- What if Minnesota solves the problem of grade inflation; that penalizes its undergraduates in terms of getting into graduate and professional schools.

No it won't, because people know when a lower GPA represents hard work at a good school.

One is told that the mean GPA at Harvard is 3.85 and 85% of students graduate with distinction; if Minnesota does something out of line with other institutions, its undergraduates will be harmed.

The purpose of including the mean is to protect students who get a B in difficult courses. Legislating on grade inflation is nearly impossible; it is to be hoped that bringing the issue to light will help. If the faculty want grades to creep up, that's fine. But a lot of faculty are probably not aware of the numbers; if they see them, the data may create a ferment.

- It is possible to know which courses are taught by TAs. In at least one unit, TAs often want to give

all As and Bs, and the faculty have argued with them about it; the TAs are the ones most likely to give into the pressure to award high grades, especially in small classes.

- Reports on grade averages for all courses are produced, Mr. Lewis reported; those could be made more widely available. They do not provide information for each section in the larger courses, although it may be that departments are able to obtain that information. The information should also be provided by faculty member.
- Could not the grades by course be included in faculty evaluations? What is it the Committee is trying to get at? Does it want a slap on the hand from the chair? Does it want to discourage As and Bs?
- This is a problem to all of the institutions "in the free world" and something bigger than what the Committee can legislate about. Grade inflation will happen, and companies and schools know that some grades are better than they should be and some are not, and they know it when they review transcripts.
- Getting all As does not mean what it used to and it works against the University; grades cannot be used to discriminate among people in making choices for jobs and schools. That does not mean the University should just throw in the towel. It also undermines the external perceptions of and support for the University, because if it is perceived that the faculty give everyone high grades, they will be seen as not going their jobs.
- One reason to take some action is because grades are not inflating in all units of the University, and students in units where grades have not gone up should be protected.

There are two separate issues at hand, grade inflation and the transcript, it was pointed out. Mr. Lewis agreed to explore the possibility of distributing more broadly the reports on grade distributions by course. The Committee was interested in departments receiving their grades by course and instructor as well of those of their college.

Committee members deliberated briefly what it is they wished to accomplish and whether they had the desire or the responsibility to police grade inflation. There was agreement that making information and data more widely available, plus trying to educate the faculty about why the issue is important and the negative effects of grade inflation, would be an appropriate starting effort in order to get faculty to reflect on the issue. The Committee will not change the culture by adopting a rule.

It was agreed that Professor Koch would prepare materials that might be used and that Mr. Lewis would report on how readily and inexpensively the reports of interest could be prepared and distributed, and that the Committee would revisit this issue in Winter Quarter. It was also moved, seconded, and unanimously voted to withdraw the amendment concerning the inclusion of mean grades on student transcripts.

## **2. Semesters, the State Fair, and the St. Paul Campus**

Professor Koch next welcomed Assistant Vice President Paul Tschida to the meeting to discuss

traffic and other issues related to the State Fair and the St. Paul campus.

Mr. Tschida reviewed the contractual arrangements between the University and the State Agricultural Board, which runs the State Fair (details of which were presented in the November 16 Senate docket), and the extent to which they control parking and the transitway before, during, and after the Fair. He reviewed the issues related to traffic, parking, and access to the campus, during the Fair and at other times of the year as well. His office has retained a consultant to obtain data on traffic coming to the St. Paul campus. He concluded, at one point, that starting the fall semester before the Fair is over would be "a mess." He also observed that the State Agricultural Board is a political savvy group that is also sophisticated in its negotiations, and suggested that the University would be unlikely to make any headway in changing either the time or location of the Fair.

Committee members discussed with Mr. Tschida a number of issues related to the semester calendar and the State Fair. The principal problem is congestion, he told the Committee; it would be difficult to make it easy for University people to get to the St. Paul campus. The Fair also controls parking and the transitway for several days AFTER the Fair, but that arrangement could perhaps be adjusted through discussions with the Board.

Mr. Tschida told the Committee he did not know, now, when a possible starting time for a fall semester would be.

A big problem is not the State Fair next to the St. Paul campus, maintained one Committee member; it is a calendar that would end too early in the spring, effectively eliminating the possibility of field work in many of the disciplines housed on the St. Paul campus. Field work would not be possible if summer classes start in mid-May (for example, Lake Itasca remains frozen until late spring); the idea of the January term would help a great deal for programs that require outdoor field work. Students were very interested in a January term, it was reported.

It would be a disservice to the University to frame this as a "University versus the State Fair" issue; there are other reasons besides the State Fair to start classes later, said one Committee member. The position the University should take is that it is its responsibility to serve students. The question is whether the University will make the decision based on educational issues or on peripheral issues.

Committee members then deliberated briefly the merits of a 14-week versus a 15-week semester. Some have argued that the extra week makes a difference for the amount of time to cover materials; others have argued the 14-week semester is long enough. The Committee could not ascertain a material advantage offered by one or the other, and concluded that given the other problems with an early start, it would be better to recommend 14-week semesters and a January term.

Professor Koch thanked Mr. Tschida for joining the meeting.

### **3. Semester Conversion Standards**

The Committee then took up again the issues surrounding semester conversion, and after an hour's deliberation, reached agreement on the DRAFT DISCUSSION standards it wished to present to the Senate on January 11. The points made in the discussion were these:

- The Committee has not heard any persuasive arguments favoring a 14-week over a 15-week semester, or vice-versa. There has been considerable interest in a January term. Virtually no one seems to like the early (August) start.
- A January term might permit saving the costs of heat, lighting, and custodial services in at least some buildings or portions of buildings. How such a term would affect graduate assistant appointments would need to be explored; the appointments of faculty, PA, and civil service staff would be unaffected. Instructional time would actually increase by one week (from 30 weeks during three quarters to 31 weeks--28 weeks in two 14-week semesters plus one 3-week interim). Questions of teaching loads and student attendance and courses offered should be explored with institutions that offer the interim term. Questions about whether the interim term should be part of the regular teaching load, how students register, and other matters, can be learned from discussions with other institutions; the University would not be inventing anything new were it to adopt such a calendar. One question is whether or not any large research institutions use it and if it would work for a place like this. An interim term would help coordinate campus students who wanted to take courses on the Twin Cities campus, if there were one registration system and one calendar; the interim term would require a calendar with a uniform spring semester start date if this were to work. There may be more enthusiasm for a January term than a May term, if only because faculty who have taught for two 14-week semesters may not have the energy for an additional term at the end of the year.
- If there is an issue of perception about two 14-week semesters versus three 10-week quarters, the University should explain to key people in the legislature and elsewhere that this is not a big issue educationally and that this calendar is used by at least two or three other Big Ten schools.
- If a 14-week semester, the length of the class period should be considered. Some do not like the shifting starting time, but that is already the case. It seems necessary to retain the 15-minute break between classes. Committee members disagreed mildly about the "chunks" in which material is taught; one inquired if the additional five minutes mattered. The point was made that adding five minutes to a course, when multiplied over several courses per semester over four years, amounted to a significant increase in instructional time for students. Even if new concepts were not introduced with the additional five minutes, it may permit additional class discussion or slightly more time in instruction to permit students to better understand something.
- Some Committee members voiced objection to stipulating the number of courses required for graduation, and for the stipulating a standard credit module. It is more important to insist on the value of a credit (at least three hours of academic effort per week). If four-credit courses were to become the norm, students could graduate with as few as 30 courses, and if students took five-credit courses, they could graduate with as few as 24 courses. ; is that sufficient breadth? The problem is the definition of breadth: it can be delivered within courses, some argue, but others say that "breadth" would be in the discipline--lengthening a course does not equal breadth AMONG disciplines.

The Committee should agree on some number, less than 40 (as was proposed in the original draft discussion standards), and to the question of why SCEP should say anything on the subject at all,

because departments will play games. They may also push students to take the same number of courses that they do now (to meet major requirements), thus reducing the number of courses the students could take outside the department.

- The most important parameter is the definition of the value of the credit. In the view of some, it is more important than the contact hour issue.
- The conversion to semesters will force a lot of faculty and departments to do what they do not want to do, and will require curriculum committees to monitor developments.
- (1) It is crucial that the 1:1 ratio between credits and weekly student-faculty contact hours be maintained. (2) That ratio need not be the bedrock of the conversion standards; there can be professionalism and good will among faculty in making the conversion. If one expects the best, one will get it; if one expects people to cheat, they will, and the change will be a negative experience. There should only be exceptions to the 1:1 rule; no one argues about faculty contact, but there should be flexibility. One can spend MORE time, but this requires there be AT LEAST one contact hour per week per credit; those who do not support the concept (especially the Morris representatives) because of their instructional arrangements would, within their academic unit, be making the decisions about what met the standard.

Should contact hours include undergraduate recitation sections? They can be as or more valuable than a 100-student lecture. Committee members seemed disinclined to credit undergraduate contact hours. One can be troubled by counting contact with graduate students, but there is a difference.

There are a wide variety of instructional methods used by campuses and disciplines; there are labs in the sciences and field work in other programs. Several hours of lab work or 12-15 hours of field work should be credit worthy. The 1:1 ratio should be flexible, with faculty permitted to defend a variation from the standard.

The Committee must protect the idea that the student experience must include a minimum number of hours of contact with a faculty member, if "faculty" is defined to include advanced graduate students. Students pay tuition and have a right to expect to see faculty.

- Students must have some expectations of the time that will be required by a course; if a course is offered for three credits, can they be expected to work a lot MORE than nine hours per week? If there is a great deal more work, then the course should carry more credits. Students need to know that 12-15 credits will equate to about 36-45 hours per week of academic effort. There may be exceptions to the rule (a course may require more than three hours of work) but they should be noted.
- It might be that credits for labs and field work should be identified separately for courses, so a course might carry 3 credits for lectures and associated work and an additional 1 credit for three or more hours of lab or field work.

What about a 3-credit course with two hours of lecture, seven hours of field work, and additional

work besides? Whoever is responsible for the course should have to argue that the additional out-of-class experience is worthy of additional credit; it is up to the faculty member to make the case before the college curriculum committee.

- The 1:1 ratio between credits and weekly contact hours makes sense, but there may be a lot of reasons not to follow it strictly. If the proposal can deal with the major exceptions, such as lab and field work, there would be less "wobble room" with the policy, but options are not removed because curriculum committees would be authorized to approve exceptions.

The student workload makes more sense than the 1:1 ratio, when there are so many different means of instruction; would cooperative learning count as contact? The 1:1 ratio does not solve problems. But collaborative learning is far from the norm; education could evolve, and if collaborative learning becomes more widespread, then those who use it would have no difficulty convincing curriculum committees of its benefits.

- When one considers that the overwhelming majority of CLA 4-credit courses meet for three hours per week or less, that many courses do not respect the 3:1 ratio between weekly hours of academic effort expected and course credit, and then considers the rising GPAs of the last decade, there is a clear message: One should be very skeptical about the quality of education students are receiving.

Is there reason to think these changes are not being made for good educational reasons?

The conversion to semesters should be used as an opportunity to recalibrate the time in the classroom and work required of students; this will mean reshaping an environment and culture, which may not readily change. The Committee must agitate for the need to do so, however.

The idea of recalibrating with the semester change is naive; a lot of other things must be done.

The Committee sets the policy; the administration implements it.

- No Committee members expressed dissent from the proposition that the 1922 Senate standard of establishing a credit equal to three hours of work per week.

The Committee concluded it would present the following DRAFT PROPOSAL FOR DISCUSSION:

1. There should be two fourteen-week semesters, to begin after Labor Day, and a January interim term.
2. A degree will require a minimum of 120 credits; departments may require up to 130 credits without special authorization.
3. Courses should, for the most part, be offered for three or four semester credits; within the permissible range of 120-130 credits for a degree, the expected norm (but not rule) of 3-4 credits, and the liberal education requirements, departments and colleges can determine whatever is necessary for their programs.

4. The recommended standard class hour will be of a length to be determined by further discourse among Committee members.
5. A credit shall be equal to three hours of academic work per week; this reaffirms the 1922 Senate policy.
6. There shall be, at a minimum, a 1:1 ratio between credits for a course and weekly instructor-student contact hours. Exemptions will be noted for certain categories of courses (such as correspondence courses and independent study, and so on.)

It was agreed that Professor Koch and Dr. Engstrand would draft a set of proposed standards with accompanying commentary for consideration by the Committee before it is presented to the Senate Consultative Committee. Because of the impossibility of finding a meeting time in December, much of the SCEP discussion must be by email.

#### **4. Discussion with Senior Vice President E. F. Infante**

Dr. Infante joined the discussion as the Committee was deliberating what it wished to include in its draft set of standards for presentation to the Senate. He said he could understand the 3:1 ratio for workload, but in other cases the response of people will be "let `em enforce it." There are dangers in some of these standards; some will respond by saying "who are these people?"

He related that he would be going to a legislative meeting about mandates that have been imposed on the University that should not have been. The Committee could contribute to this approach by talking about principles, not specifics, because the institution is too diverse for specifics. The Committee has done a good job in putting questions on the table, he said; some of them may not need answers, because the answers will be different for GC, the Law School, and IT. Principles, however, should go across the institution. He said he was pleading with the Committee to put its emphasis on principles, not on procedures or details.

There are many audiences that need to be convinced, he said; the Senate is only one. The central administration, students, and the Board of Regents are also involved. This is not a legislative/executive institution; there is only one legislative body: the Board of Regents, which acts on the President's recommendations. The Board needs to be convinced, especially if the Committee tries to apply specific rules.

The 1:1 ratio will create havoc, Dr. Infante told the Committee; there are too many exceptions. He repeated that the Committee should consider PRINCIPLES.

He also asked that the Committee be in contact with administrative offices and campuses not represented on it as it deals with semester conversion standards. He said there is a need for a level of sensitivity, especially with the coordinate campuses.

Dr. Infante then said there is much that everyone wishes to do; there must be a cost benefit analysis of proposals. He said he has received a lot of email, especially from the St. Paul campus, about the

semester conversion and the discussion in SCEP minutes.

One Committee member pointed out to Dr. Infante that the Committee is trying to get people to think about the issues, and disagreed with him about the necessity of doing cost-benefit analyses before proposals are fully developed. The Committee has consistently said these are POSSIBLE standards, in order to help people think about alternatives. The threat, Dr. Infante responded, is that the Committee will reject the possibility of people thinking together.

Is he saying that because people have seen the SCEP discussions, they do not like the recommendations? The Committee has made no policy recommendation. The question, Dr. Infante said, is getting people involved, because the way information travels, people think the question is the answer. He is concerned that the Committee is seen as shrugging its shoulders.

One Committee member told Dr. Infante that he asks the Committee to deal with principles but that it never sees the administration implement the Committee's actions. Dr. Infante took exception to the statement.

With respect to the 1:1 ratio between credits and weekly contact hours, he said that some are concerned with such things as distance education, correspondence courses, and other activities. He said he hoped the discussion would be rich so that others would be allowed to contribute, and recommended that the Committee communicate with others in order that the University could move forward together. One Committee member noted that the MOST discussion of these standards is coming from Morris.

Morris has noted that it is autonomous, Dr. Infante said, and wants to conduct its own discussions. In the area of grading, the Committee has proposed exceptions for the Law School and the Medical Schools; one senses that there are others that may also wish exceptions. Morris, for example, is very different. He said he did not see what to do about other exceptions, and asked that the tenor of the Committee conversation always include question marks until the last possible moment.

If the Committee sends something to the Senate as a question, one Committee member pointed out, there is no feedback. If it sends something as a proposal, it provokes a reaction and discussion. That these are working hypotheses is not perceived in the materials, Dr. Infante said.

One Committee member pointed out that the Committee was ASKED to develop a uniform grading system and calendar, because multiple systems were too expensive. That request did not come from him, Dr. Infante responded. On questions of cost and economy, there should be one system. It is desirable the calendars be as close as possible, and the costs and benefits of deviations should be examined. But the Committee should not force the University to go one way without considering those costs and benefits. Many issues need to be considered before the Committee paints the University into one corner.

One Committee member took Dr. Infante to task for telling the Committee it should only consider principles but then insisting that costs and benefits be considered. The Committee presents proposed standards and information about them, that would permit such analysis, but is told they are not acceptable and that in some cases answers are not needed. Dr. Infante demurred, saying the way to make progress is to get agreement on principles but not to act at a level of specificity that includes the 1:1 ratio in contact hours.

To discuss principles without looking at the answers, one Committee member maintained, means one cannot engage in cost-benefit considerations because there are no specifics. On the calendar, for instance, one proposal is for 15-week semesters, with the fall semester completed before the winter holidays; the Committee then looked at examples of what such a calendar might be like, with August and September start dates. If the Committee were to consider the principle of a 15-week semester, he would urge the consideration of costs and benefits, but the Committee would be unable to do so because it could not consider specifics.

Dr. Infante said the calendar must be defined but that there will need to be exceptions to any calendar that is adopted. He said he is concerned when there are suggestions that cut people off from the discussion; the Committee has not done that, but it has given that perception, especially with the outstate campuses. He asked that all colleges and campuses be included in the discussions.

One Committee member said the point was understood but that one must disagree completely with him. There has been a great deal of discussion, she observed, and SCEP has NOT sent any recommendations to the Senate and never intended to exclude anyone; they have invited discussion. She noted that the language of the semester conversion standards document in the Senate docket was quite explicit about seeking debate on the series of questions that SCEP had posed. Another Committee member pointed out that SCEP is well-informed about the concerns of the Morris campus; there is no Duluth representation and the Crookston faculty representative has been unable to attend the meetings because of when they had to be scheduled. The Committee has no formal way to obtain information from other parts of the University, although there is a Duluth representative on the Faculty Consultative Committee.

As for grading, one Committee member, it was the administration that argued the present situation cannot continue, with multiple systems, and that a uniform system is needed. Dr. Infante agreed that the grading systems are too numerous, but it is clear that there will be three even if the SCEP proposal is adopted, because it explicitly grants exceptions to the Law School and the two medical schools. One should have to demonstrate an extreme reason not to have uniformity, he said, but he wants to be sure there is a conversation with Crookston, Duluth, and Morris about the system. Alternatively, the student systems at the coordinate campuses could be separated as well, and then one can question if a uniform system is sensible. His question is why the system should not be uniform; it costs money not to be. But in a decentralized institution, maybe there are good reasons for a lack of uniformity. Dr. Infante noted that there are enormous costs associated with multiple grading systems, and that most of those multiple systems are on the Twin Cities campus. He emphasized the need to bring people together in a time when money is short.

One Committee member acknowledged the economic considerations but inquired if the role of the Committee was not to discuss the educational policy implications of the issue. If the Committee discusses an issue from only one point of view, there will be trouble later, Dr. Infante replied. The reason for semesters is not because the legislature took an educational policy viewpoint, he said; it was mostly economic and because they wanted conformity in order to foster transfers. He said he hoped the Committee would consider more than educational policy. Why should the State Fair dictate policy? It should not, but that is where the Fair is, so must be accounted for.

The Committee started with educational policy considerations, one Committee member observed, and then broadened the discussion. If the primary reason for the change is economic, why did not the administration just mandate it? It may be that there are educational policy reasons NOT to have uniformity, Dr. Infante said.

Is he upset because the Committee is shaking the boat too much, asked one Committee member? Does he want the shaking to be more gentle? Dr. Infante denied that, but said that he wants everyone to shake with the Committee. The WAY the Committee raises policy questions is what he is asking it to look at, said one Committee member, to think more about how it does it, and to think beyond the faculty to organizational components of the institution.

Dr. Infante said he would hope the Committee would take seriously the need for people to participate in the decision-making. With respect to grading, it may be cheaper and better to have one system, but that must be balanced with other considerations, and he said he wants to be sure people participate in the decision so they accept it. One Committee member said that was understandable, but in recognizing that the Law School and medical schools will not be part of a uniform system, does that mean every college may create its own calendar as well?

Dr. Infante said he hoped not, but that they would not do so as a result of understanding the mutual responsibilities each has to the institution.

One can understand the need for better communication, said another Committee member, but what is the Committee to do when constituents do not respond to calls for comments? What if the Committee asks and receives nothing? As a multi-campus institution, Dr. Infante said, it must be recognized that responsibility and authority are delegated. He invited the Committee to use his office to discuss the issues through the Duluth Chancellor's office. The Committee is discussing matters that will apply to Duluth--but they are not part of the discussion and must be involved.

It was pointed out that SCEP has been conducting its business in the same way that all Senate committees have done since the time the Duluth opted for collective bargaining: they act for the Senate, and how Senate policies are applied or implemented at Duluth has always been a matter for the administration, except for the Medical School faculty and some PA appointees who are represented in the Senate and in the governance system.

How much clearer can the invitation to participate in the debate be, asked one exasperated Committee member? The Senate's action does not apply to Duluth, Dr. Infante noted. He said he was not trying to slap hands but only to point out that there is a serious problem. Professor Koch offered to send a personal letter to the Duluth Chancellor, saying they had no intention of antagonizing anyone and wanted broad discussion. She noted that she had spoken with the Council of Undergraduate Deans, seeking discussion; that group had a Duluth representative. Dr. Infante suggested that Vice Chancellor Magnuson be invited to participate as well. Professor Koch said the Committee wants Duluth involved, although warned that there may not be agreement among the many groups talking about these issues.

Dr. Infante said the issue is connectivity, and it cannot come through faculty participation. It was noted that SCEP is an appointed Senate committee, with members selected from areas represented in the Senate. One senses from this discussion is that it should not discuss issues that cross campuses, but then

how would the decisions be made? Dr. Infante noted that the colleges are independent and that Senate authority runs to issues that cross collegiate lines. His view is that each college unit at the University has more academic independence than most institutions; this is the only school he is aware of that has no central curriculum committee. Given that, and the structure of the Senate, the Committee must be mindful of the diversity of the University and keep open the connections with the coordinate campuses.

What about communication with the Board of Regents, asked one Committee member? There are several issues going to the educational policy committee of the Board, Dr. Infante said, including semesters, which is creating consideration of fundamental changes. The Board is very interested in these matters. Should that communication go from the Committee directly to the Board or through his office, asked another Committee member? It should go directly, Dr. Infante said, but should be arranged, and he volunteered to facilitate it. Professor Koch demurred, saying the communication should come through the Senate Consultative Committee, and for discussion, because there are no policy recommendations yet prepared.

If policy by the Senate is to come to the Board of Regents, Dr. Infante explained, it is to be brought by the President to the Committee of the Whole. His agreement with Regent Sahlstrom, who chairs the educational policy committee, is that they will be provided updates on important issues. His chief concern, he said, is that the Committee be clear about how it presents itself, and if it is doing so for the entire University. Professor Koch said she understood, but reminded Dr. Infante again that it is a Senate committee working on behalf of those it represents.

Professor Koch adjourned the meeting at 5:15.

-- Gary Engstrand

University of Minnesota