

Minutes*

Senate Committee on Finance and Planning
Tuesday, April 10, 1995
3:15 - 5:00
Room 238 Morrill Hall

Present: Virginia Gray (chair), David Berg, Mark Davison, Craig Dexheimer, Karen Karni, Gerald Klement, Roger Martin, Patrice Morrow, Doris Rubenstein, Anne Sales, Thomas Scott, Craig Swan, James VanAlstine

Regrets: Thora Cartlidge

Absent: William Gerberich, Allen Goldman, Thomas Hoffmann, Roger Paschke, Richard Pfutzenreuter

Guests: Halil Dundar, Darwin Hendel, Pat Opatz, Jane Whiteside (Academic Affairs)

[In these minutes: Critical measures; a tuition committee; size of administration]

1. Critical Measures

Professor Gray called the meeting to order at 3:15 and welcomed the guests from Academic Affairs to talk about the next set of critical measures.

Dr. Hendel began by thanking the Committee for the opportunity to visit the Committee and noted that the previous comments from it had been helpful. He reviewed the process that had taken place to the point that the draft critical measures had been prepared and noted three changes. First, the measures will go to the Board of Regents for information in June and action in July, a month later than originally thought. Second, one of the measures (contributing to compelling state needs) has been moved into the third phase because it fits better with the other measures in that same group. Third, after hearing from many people, they have concluded that technology should be a separate critical measure by itself, rather than folded into facilities infrastructure, so the additional measure will be added to the third phase.

For each of the seven measures now drafted, Dr. Hendel said, there are areas of emphasis and there are also important supplemental measures. These are different from the first five measures, in that some are more qualitative and not as easily translatable into numbers; nor is there as much baseline information available, so establishing performance goals is more difficult. He told the Committee that they intended to work with committees and individuals for about three weeks on these drafts, produce another draft, and then produce a final draft for the Regents in June.

Discussion then turned to the individual measures.

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- On student satisfaction, the general question is a good one; why not use teaching evaluation questions as another measure? One could draw inferences if there were differences in results. The teaching evaluation results are a supplemental measure, Dr. Hendel said, and they want to pay attention to student evaluation of teaching, but it may be similar to grades: the University could not be confident it was doing a better job if there were an increase in the measure. He agreed that a distinction between ratings of instruction and other campus experiences is important.
- The proposed measure on proportion of classes taught by regular faculty is intended to respond to questions from the outside, Dr. Hendel said. Part of a research university education is instruction provided by faculty, and this is a measure of their involvement; there are other possibilities. One concern expressed by a Committee member was about the best educational environment for students: one could say the best would be a class of 20 taught by a TA, while this measure could push the University toward offering classes of 1000 taught by a full professor. The incentive would be perverse. Dr. Hendel agreed it needed more attention.

One way to approach this, it was said, that would recognize the uniqueness of the University, would be to assess the extent to which faculty are involved in the mentoring of teaching done by TAs; that would preserve the apprenticeship role, allow the focus on class size, but keep faculty accountable for instruction. Information would have to be collected at the department level about use of TAs, how they are supervised and monitored, the faculty role, the feedback TAs receive, and so on. It could be a hard measure for which to collect information, it was said.

Asked about the application of these measures to CEE and part-time students, Dr. Hendel said that they have not identified a way to get at the students served by CEE or the new University College, but that certainly does not mean they are not important. This will need to be part of the discussion as UC evolves, and it will be necessary to document the student experience in UC. There will probably have to be mechanisms different from those being developed for Day School students.

Is there a way to measure the number of students directly involved in research beyond UROP and directed research? They handle only a small number of students. Dr. Hendel agreed that there is information available at the college and department level that has not been looked at for the institutional-level measure.

Asked if the overall student satisfaction measure would be used for comparison with other institutions, or just as a measure of change over time, Dr. Hendel said it would be the latter. It is very difficult to obtain comparable information from other institutions. They need to decide on reasonable goals for the University and for each campus, and identify what contributes to overall student satisfaction. They have an idea of what has an impact on it; the University must direct resources to the major items that contribute to the measure.

- On the post-graduation experience, there will be a survey. One Committee member commended this, recalling that legislators have asked why the University does not survey its graduates. The survey will focus on career and employment opportunities, Dr. Hendel said, as well as try to obtain more information about students' additional educational experiences. Graduates will also be asked about their overall quality of life; this is not directly connected to their University experience, but

higher education contributes to it. This item is important to ensuring the support and involvement of graduates with the University, and ties into resource development among the alumni.

- In scholarship, research, and artistic accomplishment, one Committee member observed that this is something about which the legislature would like more information. Whether or not there should be an attempt to define "prestigious accomplishment" was raised; it was pointed out that that is something that can be debated at length within any discipline.

One Committee member maintained that the measures must not consist of academic talking to themselves; it is important that they be understandable to outsiders, because they can affect future levels of support. The issues of the impact of University research, which is what the public and legislature are interested in, will be in the next phase, Dr. Hendel responded; they are also the most difficult measures to develop. The measures will cover a broad range of things, Dr. Whiteside added, some of which will be more meaningful inside the academy, others of which will be more important to external groups. People also need to be aware that by saying something is important, attention will be focused on the units that do it. However the Board of Regents finally acts, there will be a need to direct resources to accomplish the goals.

- In terms of the overall satisfaction of Minnesota citizens, the measure implies that there will be polling as one indicator. The views of key constituent groups will also be sought.
- The faculty and staff experience measure now focuses on those who are here, not those who are coming or leaving; recruitment and retention will be addressed elsewhere, perhaps in the college or department measures. The issue is the environment for people who work at the University, ranging from salary to training to working conditions. Committee members concurred with the decision to leave out recruitment and retention from institutional-level measures.
- The Facilities Management Subcommittee raised several questions about the facilities infrastructure measures, Professor Davison reported. They sound like input measures, rather than outcomes; there was support for the notion of preservation of facilities; there needs to be measures of how facilities are used, as well as of their quality. The appropriate principles revolve around preservation, access, flexibility, and utilization. Dr. Opatz explained the difficulties they had had developing the measure, and that they were now trying to respond to the concerns of the Subcommittee, including greater use of measures of quality. They also have to limit the number of measures, he noted, but agreed with a comment that data about efficiency in the use of classrooms, for example, might be appropriate for the measure. Several Committee members objected to the apparently exclusive reliance on dollars spent as the measure. One individual pointed out that more money spent on facilities does not necessarily equal better outcomes, and unless the focus is on outcomes, the University could continue to fall behind while spending money on facilities that could be better spent elsewhere.

Dr. Hendel reported that the issue of technology, because it is so important to the University's future, should be separated from the facilities infrastructure measure; the facilities measure can focus upon such things as classrooms, which are readily identifiable and something in which the public will see improvement, if it occurs.

- The resource acquisition measure was among the more difficult measures, Dr. Hendel told the Committee. It would be helpful if the resource development could be tied to goals and other measures. For example, there has been talk about a football stadium; the University would be better off WITHOUT that resource development. Another Committee member noted that the items in the proposed measure are non-traditional resources, while recent thinking has been to consider resources more broadly. The point is to have measures over which the University has some control, Dr. Opatz said; that is not true for state appropriations, and in the case of tuition, it is not clear if it is better to keep the rates low or to increase them. This proposes to look at other sources that could be used to replace the decline in state support.

One Committee member inquired about possible measures relating to traffic, parking, crime, and so on. Dr. Opatz explained that these were not seen as the most important issues requiring institutional measures, and that some of them are specific to individual campuses. The campus master planning processes are also taking into account some of these issues, Dr. Hendel pointed out.

Dr. Hendel said the suggestions they have received from Senate committees has been very helpful, and their work has also benefited from other efforts underway (such as the classroom study and the report of the Compensation Working Group).

Professor Gray thanked Drs. Dundar, Hendel, Opatz, and Whiteside for joining the Committee.

2. Tuition Subcommittee Proposal

Professor Gray then turned to Ms. Sales for discussion of a proposal to create a Subcommittee on Tuition. Ms. Sales explained that she was concerned about the consultation process on setting tuition, so she developed this proposal. There needs to be a structured way to consider the costs for students attending the institution, and there is no such mechanism now in place. This proposal would create a standing Subcommittee on Tuition and Fees, which is more important now that the Board of Regents have approved the concept of imposing separate fees but without a methodical means of reviewing them.

Several Committee members spoke in favor of the proposal. One recalled that there had been no place to go when a department had considered the issue of fees charged, and that it would be desirable to have such a place so that fees were not imposed without justification. Another suggested that subcommittee responsibilities include student aid, because it is tied to tuition and fees.

One Committee member said it would be difficult to discuss tuition without discussing other sources of revenue at the same time, so the tradeoffs could be considered. If there were a subcommittee on tuition, should there then also be one on faculty salaries? Another asked about the extent to which this Committee, or a subcommittee, is a policy committee and the extent to which it is an administrative group.

It would be both, Ms. Sales said, although basically it would be consultative. The subcommittee could serve as a place to bring requests for fees, but there will also be recurring policy issues that will need to be considered. Ideally, she said in response to a query, the subcommittee would be all-University.

One Committee member speculated on the relationship of the subcommittee with the move to

Responsibility Center Management (RCM). If a dean makes plans to do something, what role would the subcommittee have? There will be a need for a group to talk about tuition as RCM is implemented, said another Committee member; unless the University moves to tuition by the course, there will still be general policy issues that will need airing. The only people now talked to formally about tuition are students, but there are other constituencies for tuition issues. Even under RCM, added another, the deans will have a responsibility to consult. It may be that some of the more self-contained units, such as the Law School, would be less involved in such consultation, but most colleges would be.

It was pointed out that when the Senate committee structure was reorganized several years ago, provision was made for standing committees to establish subcommittees that could include members from outside the membership of the parent committee.

Professor Gray promised to speak with Professor Adams about the appropriateness of this Committee establishing a subcommittee along the lines proposed.

3. Size of the Administration

Professor Gray then turned to Mr. Berg for a presentation of statistics about the size of the administration. He reviewed for the Committee the tables he had prepared in response to a request from the Faculty Consultative Committee.

[Note: the presentation to the Finance and Planning Committee paralleled very closely the presentation Mr. Berg made to the FCC on March 30; only those points that differed from those minutes will be included here.]

The three major points to take away from these data, Mr. Berg said, are these:

- Counting the number of people or positions is less important than examining expenditures by function.
- Administrative expenses have increased, but not significantly at the highest central administration levels.
- Most increases in administrative expenses have been at the professional and technical mid-level appointees.

Compared with other AAU Data Exchange schools, the University:

- is slightly below average in instructional expenditures
- is above average in research expenditures
- is way above average in public service expenditures (2nd in the group)
- is below average in library spending
- is way above average in "academic support" (administration)

Mr. Berg said he could not explain why the University was significantly above average in "academic support" and is going to investigate it. His guess is that the University may include much more of its expenditures for computing in this category than do other institutions. The University also has more deans and associate and assistant deans than others in the group, in part because it has more colleges.

Administrative salaries and faculty salaries at the University have risen at almost identical rates over the last 20 years, Mr. Berg said. Asked if administrator salaries ranked as badly as faculty salaries in the University's peer group, Mr. Berg said he could not make good comparisons because the positions are not uniform. It is his impression that administrators are probably not as bad off as the faculty, by comparison. The President and the two senior vice presidents are VERY low in comparison to peer institutions; others are probably about average.

Professor Gray thanked Mr. Berg for his presentation and adjourned the meeting at 4:50.

-- Gary Engstrand

University of Minnesota