

Minutes*

Faculty Consultative Committee
Wednesday, July 7, 1999
1:00 – 3:00
Room 238 Morrill Hall

- Present: David Hamilton (chair pro tem), Linda Brady, Susan Brorson, Richard Goldstein, Stephen Gudeman, M. Janice Hogan, Roberta Humphreys, Mary Jo Kane, Leonard Kuhi, Joseph Massey, Judith Martin
- Absent: Mary Dempsey, Marvin Marshak, Fred Morrison, V. Rama Murthy, Paula Rabinowitz, Jeff Ratliff-Crain
- Guests: Tonya Moten Brown (President's Office); Dr. Richard Bianco (Institutional Official for the Animal Care Program; Academic Health Center)
- Other: Maureen Smith (Institutional Relations)

[In these minutes: athletics; salaries; possible attacks on laboratories using animals]

1. Athletics

Professor Hamilton convened the meeting at 1:00 and explained that he was serving as chair because Professor Morrison had been called away for a family medical problem. He then welcomed Dr. Tonya Brown to the meeting, to discuss the athletic situation, and began by requesting a motion to close the meeting. The Committee voted unanimously to do so.

In the 50-minute discussion, half of which was with Dr. Brown, the Committee was provided an update on the status of investigations, a likely schedule of events, and then turned to considering what the faculty role should be with respect to the findings of the investigations.

At the conclusion of the discussion, the Committee adopted the following motion:

Resolved,

in view of President Yudof's statement that the investigation of the men's basketball program has revealed "numerous, maybe even massive, incidents of academic misconduct,"

the Faculty Consultative Committee appoint a special faculty committee to provide faculty analysis and perspective on allegations of academic misconduct and to make specific recommendations for change where needed, to identify appropriate faculty responses and actions to findings of misconduct, and to evaluate University policies, processes, and procedures in order that any necessary changes be made.

* 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.

Several members of the Committee concurred with Professor Martin's suggestion that the majority of the special committee should be composed of former FCC chairs.

2. Faculty Salaries

Professor Hamilton noted that Professor Morrison had intended to talk briefly about faculty salaries, and said that one point that needs to be made is the necessity for good data. At this time it is unclear what salary increases are being delivered in the various colleges.

Committee members made a number of comments on the topic.

- (Humphreys) The Committee should look not only at averages but also median salaries by college, because there is a surprising range of salaries.
- (Hamilton) Consideration of salaries should include all funds.
- (Hamilton) There is a central data custodian (Dr. Zetterberg), and the Committee should start a dialogue with him about salary data. In addition, HOW salaries, and increases, are reported is a problem; the administration does not do a good job of communicating what raises will be (i.e., in setting expectations, because even if the average increase is to be 3%, after colleges direct funds to retention, special merit, equity, and so on, many faculty will receive less than 3%--and be upset about it.) The databases that include salaries are public, and if one is conversant with how to use them, the Committee need not rely solely on the administration for salary data.
- (Humphreys) Data from colleges other than the top 30 research universities should be considered; there are some salaries that are much higher.
- (Hamilton) There is a need for more precise information from Dr. Bruininks' office.
- (Gudeman) Thought needs be given about the kind of data the Committee wants (e.g., historical, comparative, etc.); the Finance and Planning Committee will devote part of its first meeting to this specific topic, and he will then propose that Dr. Bruininks be requested to provide the data. He said he has been surprised at the lack of analysis of salary data. He also said he did NOT wish to get into comparisons among units within the University.
- (Gudeman) The point of obtaining and analyzing the data is to understand the budget and to get faculty salaries as definite a commitment as building debt service, rather than as a residual. There is need for more discussion on the topic so that there is a change in understanding what the University is about.

It was agreed that an appropriate place to begin a conversation with Dr. Bruininks about salaries and data might be at the retreat at the Crookston campus.

3. Animal Rights Activism

Professor Hamilton now welcomed Richard Bianco, Institutional Official for the Animal Care Program and Assistant Vice President for the Academic Health Center. Mr. Bianco said that part of his job is to ensure the welfare of animals used in research and the people who work with those animals. Animal welfare has been an issue for years, and was brought to the forefront with the attacks by the Animal Liberation Front on University facilities in April. The University has learned that it is to be a target of the Animal Liberation Front (ALF)--the activities of which some have likened to terrorism--the end of July and early August. Mr. Bianco said he believes that University facilities are at risk the entire month of July.

His intent is to raise awareness about the need for lab security without turning the University into an armed camp. 95% of the faculty were positive about his message about increased awareness.

The University has animals all over the state in research facilities. Most facilities are open to public inspection, and the University responds to all Freedom of Information requests. The University does NOT videotape animals in laboratories unless doing is part of the scientific protocol of particular research.

Professor Hamilton asked Ms. Smith if she would include a note about this issue in BRIEF, and commented that the University IS becoming an armed camp, because one must now use one's University ID card to open doors that were previously not locked. The institution is fearful. Mr. Bianco said that the University is one of the few academic health centers that does not require display of IDs, which it could do and which would be a simple step to take in order to identify people going in and out. Despite "Minnesota nice," it may be necessary to ask "why are you here?"

Could there be some people on the staff who will cooperate with the ALF? That has happened, it was said. Mr. Bianco agreed, but said that the University does not do FBI checks on people, and with students, animal rights activism would probably not show up on any record anyway. The University has nothing to hide, he said--but it is possible to make anything look like anything else, because pictures can be (and have been) manipulated.

Asked if there was any research at Minnesota that attracted the ALF, Mr. Bianco said that it basically boils down to the quality of the faculty, who are doing cutting-edge work. The University is expanding animal research while many other places are restricting it--and it is doing so because of the nature of the research being conducted. The University is one of the largest animal research centers in the country--and 95% of the animals used in research at the University are rodents. The animal rights activists, however, do not direct their actions at rodents, but at other animals.

Professor Hamilton thanked Mr. Bianco for joining the meeting. Hearing no further business, he adjourned it at 2:20.

-- Gary Engstrand