

Minutes*

Faculty Consultative Committee
Thursday, December 16, 1999
2:00 – 3:30
Room 238 Morrill Hall

Present: Fred Morrison (chair), Susan Brorson, Mary Dempsey, Richard Goldstein, Mary Jo Kane, Leonard Kuhl, Joseph Massey, Judith Martin, Paula Rabinowitz

Absent: Linda Brady, Les Drewes, Stephen Gudeman, David Hamilton, Roberta Humphreys, Marvin Marshak, V. Rama Murthy, Jeff Ratliff-Crain

Guests: Vice President Sandra Gardebring

[In these minutes: activities of Institutional Relations (sesquicentennial, State Fair, capital campaign, legislative/political issues, relationship with neighborhoods); academic appointments (non-tenure/tenure-track appointments)]

1. Discussion with Vice President Gardebring

Professor Morrison convened the meeting at 2:00 and welcomed Ms. Gardebring to talk about matters of Institutional Relations.

Ms. Gardebring began by saying that she was very grateful for the work of the faculty on the allegations of academic misconduct in athletics, and added that the President wants to look more broadly at student judicial matters. She expressed appreciation for the work of the Clayton Committee and the resolution adopted by the Senate, and said that there had been good collaboration between the faculty and administration. As one concerned about public relations, Ms. Gardebring said it is her sense that the process gave the impression that the University was working together to address the problems. There have been times, she observed dryly, that that has not been the case.

Professor Kane said she thought the President's speech announcing University reaction to the investigator's report was magnificent. Ms. Gardebring said that the President had largely written it himself, and he felt strongly that he wanted to apologize. She agreed that the message was delivered strongly and that the units of the University had been acting in concert.

Ms. Gardebring then reported to the Committee on issues that are being worked on Institutional Relations.

-- Planning for the sesquicentennial (Regents' Professor Ellen Berscheid and Professor Robert Jones are co-chairing the planning committee): it has a significant budget, some of which is available to faculty, staff, and students as grants. They are trying to find celebratory events as well as events with academic content.

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-- The University had a new building at the State Fair that brought a lot of activities together very successfully. There will be four times as much space available next year, providing space to provide a stage for University activities. There are also plans for a "state fair in a box": if funds can be identified, there will be a Winnebago that travels about the state to distribute information. This is part of an effort to do what many land-grant institutions have done, to build identity across the state.

-- The capital campaign is under way, and will need faculty help. The campaign is off to a good start, with a large donation from the McKnight Foundation for faculty support. There will be other significant donations in the next few months. The campaign, she noted, is significantly focused on faculty and graduate students and scholarly efforts.

-- Three things have come out of strategic planning in Institutional Relations:

- A more targeted effort to get more national attention to the University, which will require more knowledge of faculty work. The Academic Health Center has a good strategy that Institutional Relations will develop. Her office will try to build more relationships with national publics.
- A look at internal publications used commonly with faculty. There is BRIEF and KIOSK; is it time to look at those? Should they continue to be delivered in paper?
- Community economic development. They are building better relationships with the University's geographic neighbors and trying to leverage University activities with the neighborhoods. Many universities are more planful and explicit about this activity, and a new person has been hired to work in this area. Ms. Gardebring said that her office will convene a brainstorming session with faculty who work in the area from the Humphrey Institute, the Carlson school, Architecture, and CLA. Professor Martin noted that there remains ENORMOUS hostility to the University because of the steam plant.

Apropos the steam plant, Ms. Gardebring noted that the University must reapply for its air quality standards permit; there has been a suggestion that the plant use more coal. There was, however, a bargain with the neighborhoods that the University would not use a lot of coal; even though coal is cheaper, the University needs to keep its promises to the neighborhoods, she said.

-- For the legislative session, the University's proposal has been developed and provided to the Department of Finance. The Governor's recommendations will not be known for a period. The request includes funding for plant genomics, the art building, plant growth facilities, and coordinate campus projects. There has been concern that the problems in basketball would affect the budget process, and there may have been a non-quantifiable impact, but the University is now doing well and the President has led it through the events quite well. The University has not prepared a supplemental request.

Ms. Gardebring said that Minnesota had seen a lower increase in state funding for higher education than in the states with which the University competes; if the legislature wants to make this a better state, it will need to think about that issue. This legislature seems not to have the attitude that legislatures in other states do, Professor Kuhl commented: the state is now seeing good times, and can make up for the bad times. Ms. Gardebring observed that the legislature could give a lot of money back to taxpayers and still invest a great deal for the long-term. She surmised that if the legislature were to

invest in K-12 education, higher education, and so on, people would be supportive. Professor Martin suggested that the University consider commissioning a statewide poll on the importance of K-12 education, higher education, health care, and the like; the results could strengthen the University's hand at the legislature. No one is making the argument for investment, Ms. Gardebring agreed.

Professor Rabinowitz said she has been struck by the invisibility of the University in the Twin Cities, except for the basketball scandal. The situation is very different in Ann Arbor; the University of Michigan holds a central space in the state. Ms. Gardebring said that in 1998 there were 1400 separate stories about the University in the two Twin Cities newspapers, and more in 1999, so there were 3-4 stories per day. The University is not central as an icon around the state, however; that is one reason why she wants to have more information distributed around the state in a "gophermobile," with the goal of increasing the University as a state icon. (Although Professor Brorson commented that it is her impression that in outstate areas, the University is well respected and seen as the flagship university, but it sometimes appears to people that the left hand does not know what the right hand is doing.)

From the viewpoint of the east, Professor Rabinowitz commented, Minnesota is not on the East Coast radar screen as a back-up school the way that Michigan or Wisconsin is. Michigan has moved to more non-resident students, increasing both its tuition income and its national notice. She commended Ms. Gardebring for taking steps to bring more national attention to the University. Ms. Gardebring reflected that there is a Minnesota modesty that leads the University not to brag about itself.

The Committee then talked for awhile about how the University is probably better than it thinks it is, how Minnesota urban/rural attitudes affect it, and how the whole seems to be less than the sum of the parts. Professor Kuhi said there is a perception Minnesota has a second-rate faculty, which is NOT true; the fact that the University garners over \$325 million per year in peer-reviewed research support is an indicator that the University has a large number of very good faculty. Professor Hamilton said a lot of faculty serve on NIH or Defense or NSF panels, but no one knows it, whereas other institutions make note of such service. Professor Kane said it is a mortal sin in Minnesota to be self-promoting; the campaign should include publicizing what the faculty do for the University and the state and the investments that are needed. Professor Goldstein said there is much Lake Wobegon modesty, and the University does very little in public relations compared to Michigan or Berkeley; one only has to look at their Washington offices. They get information early. Ms. Gardebring agreed with these sentiments, noted that there are multiple causes, and pointed out that she has hired a new person to work in Washington and has told him to be more aggressive in mining for opportunities. Professor Goldstein rejoined that it cannot be only one person; every college at Berkeley that has research funding has a person in Washington. The University needs to look at the Washington office staffs of other institutions.

Professor Rabinowitz reported that she was amazed to discover while on a Fulbright the number of people internationally who know about the University of Minnesota. Ms. Gardebring observed that a large number of foreign nationals have studied at the University and then gone back home; her office is trying to make better use of the data it has about these individuals. One problem, Professor Hamilton observed, is that with PeopleSoft, the University does not even know who is here, much less who graduated and left the country.

Asked if there was more the faculty or FCC could do, Ms. Gardebring said there is. She asked for help in thinking about how to connect more with the national press and how to approach the National

Research Council rankings. In her experience, the University cannot do much to raise its rankings but it can focus attention on what the University is doing.

Professor Morrison thanked Ms. Gardebring for joining FCC.

2. Campus Club

The Committee held a closed session to discuss issues associated with the Campus Club.

3. Academic Appointments Policies and Procedures Working Group

The Committee turned its attention to the report of the Working Group, chaired by Dean John Brandl.

Professor Rabinowitz commented that there are large lecture courses being taught by Educational Specialists who have TAs working for them. These TAs are not getting instruction in the profession from faculty members. The University argued against a TA union on the grounds that they were being trained by faculty. This is not training, and should be looked at more closely.

She continued by observing that the creation of more employment categories creates a double bind. She does not want to see the University treat these employees badly, but the more they are integrated into University activities, as cheaper employees, the more the University likes them and the more there comes to be a two-class system. The more their working conditions are improved, the worse the institution will be; the only ones who profit from this situation are the deans, who can hire two people for the price of one (faculty member).

The situation is fed by IMG, Professor Hamilton added; Professor Rabinowitz agreed that there is pressure to increase student numbers. That will level off, Professor Kuhl predicted, and then all will be competing on the margins for students. For all the talk of caring for students, Professor Rabinowitz concluded, there is a disconnect between the University's mission and the reality--and she said she does not in the least impugn the dedication of academic non-faculty to students and learning. She said she wanted it clear she does not resent their work, but rather the conditions under which they are employed.

There is an associated issue that will come to haunt the University, Professor Morrison reflected: there has been a significant increase in the number of freshman and sophomores without provision for accommodating them in upper division majors. In the lower division they are dealt with by teaching specialists and handled through big classes; the University does not have the upper division level classes or faculty to deal with them.

In addition, Professor Martin reported, with an increase in the number of new high school students, there is a decreasing number of spaces available for transfer students. The University, however, has made a number of promises about accepting transfer students. These two trends are running head on into each other.

Professor Goldstein said he initially thought this matter of non-faculty academic appointments was a minor matter, but now realizes there are tremendous differences among the colleges. When people are on that track they are second-class citizens, even though they are very good at what they do. They

have none of the rights of faculty, and that creates disunity in the institution. Moreover, Professor Morrison said, the institution does not have a long-term commitment to them, so they in turn have no long-term commitment to it. But they are VERY dedicated people, Professor Rabinowitz said; the result, however, is a shopping mall version of education.

It was agreed that the Committee needed to see data on the number of non-faculty academic staff. Professor Hamilton cautioned that he has been trying to generate a database, through PeopleSoft, in order to communicate with people at the University who have grants. It cannot be done.

Professor Morrison adjourned the meeting at 3:15.

-- Gary Engstrand

University of Minnesota