

Minutes*

Faculty Consultative Committee

Thursday, November 2, 2000

1:30 – 3:00

The Morrill Room

Morrill Hall

- Present: Joseph Massey (chair pro tem), Wilbert Ahern, Muriel Bebeau, Susan Brorson, Dan Feeney, Marti Hope Gonzales, David Hamilton, Marvin Marshak, Fred Morrison, Charles Speaks, Billie Wahlstrom
- Regrets: Linda Brady, Les Drewes, Richard Goldstein, V. Rama Murthy, Paula Rabinowitz, Jeff Ratliff-Crain
- Guests: Executive Vice President Robert Bruininks, Vice President Carol Carrier
- Other: Deb Cran, Florence Funk (Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost)

[In these minutes: academic appointments (policy and statement of principles); report from AAUP conference; discussion with Professor Marshak]

1. Academic Appointments

Professor Massey convened the meeting at 1:35 and explained that Professor Morrison was at a professional meeting out of state but that for the first part of the meeting, the discussion of academic appointments, he would participate by telephone connection.

Dr. Bruininks distributed copies of a revised draft of the academic appointment guidelines and said that he would, with assistance from Vice President Carrier and Ms. Cran, walk the Committee through the most recent changes. He noted that the U. S. Constitution took less time to write than have these guidelines. The document will go to the Board of Regents in December for general information about the issues; it will not be taken to the Board for approval because he and Professor Morrison agree that it is an administrative procedural document.

Dr. Bruininks commented that he did not know of any institution of this size and complexity that had gotten this far in developing academic appointment guidelines. They provide for a more streamlined system with more accountability and also initiate a reporting system so the University can begin to track the numbers of different kinds of appointments. The guidelines say that people on academic appointments have serious positions with benefits. The guidelines go a long way toward building a more respectful academic appointment system, he concluded.

Professor Morrison said, apropos a statement of principles he had drafted that had been distributed earlier to Committee members, that the Committee needed to decide the extent to which the

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issue of academic appointments should be brought to the full Senate for discussion and action. It may be that the statement of principles, included in the original Bales and Brandl reports, should be affirmed by the Senate, but he expressed doubt about the wisdom of bringing the full set of guidelines to the Senate for action. They should, however, probably be brought for information. If the principles are approved by the Senate, the Committee and the administration can then move to implement the longer guidelines.

There needs to be a consensus in the University community about what the guidelines should mean, Professor Morrison said. There are some things in the guidelines that will need to be changed but that can be done later in the year.

The Committee also needs to decide whether to take the issue to the Senate in November or postpone it until February.

Following a brief review of some of the changes that have been made in the document by Dr. Bruininks, Professor Ahern reported on the discussions at the Committee on Educational Policy (SCEP). He said that SCEP's assumption is that normally instruction will be delivered by the regular faculty. The SCEP discussion has focused on the role of the regular faculty and improvement of appointments for those who are not on the regular faculty. This document only deals with full-time appointments and may encourage the use of more part-time appointments because they are cheaper and do not carry fringe benefits. The best solution is to require reporting of the FTEs of all contract faculty/P&A teaching appointments that exceed 25%.

Professor Marshak agreed. He said that to evade the guidelines, all a department need do is hire a lot of part-time faculty. That is a large loophole he did not want to see encouraged.

Professor Morrison agreed that the FTE requirement should be put back in the document and that special plans should be required for any department where the FTE totals for contract faculty and P&A appointments exceed 25% of the full-time regular faculty. This will only trigger a notice; if there are good reasons for the numbers, it will not be a problem.

Committee members made other suggestions for language changes, including that the entire document be designated an administrative policy, not guidelines (the latter term was seen as too vague). The "unit" should be defined as the department or its equivalent, as used in the tenure code.

Dr. Bruininks, responding to Professor Ahern, said he did not agree with the assumption that instruction would normally be provided only by regular faculty. That is not possible at an institution of this size, he said. But the regular faculty ARE responsible for academic policies, the curriculum, and the delivery of instruction in their unit. Professor Morrison noted, however, that in the statement of principles the language provides that "the core instruction in every discipline, especially its upper division and graduate courses, should be provided primarily by [the regular] members of the faculty.

Dr. Bruininks said he wished the academic community to seriously consider the curriculum and student services even if a unit has the right faculty complement to run a program. There is a tendency to characterize the situation as one of tight-fisted deans and a stingy central administration, but it is much more complicated than that. It often involves such decisions as whether to put more faculty positions into one unit versus another. The principles need to be put in play along with a monitoring process; then there need to be serious discussions. This issue is about the role of the regular faculty, too, and about the

question of what a high-quality program looks like, what the curriculum looks like, and who is responsible for it.

Professor Ahern said the document suggests that above a certain point a special case must be made and that judgments will be made about individual cases. Dr. Bruininks said there are two elements: first, a planning component on how a department organizes its activities, and second, he and Vice President Carrier will track how departments are doing in developing a profile of the academic staff. It would be possible to do a more intensive review of units that are BELOW the 25% threshold while in others it may be that having 40% or 45% of the appointments in the contract faculty/P&A categories would reflect a department that is being managed responsibly and in the tradition of the discipline. A one-size-fits-all model does not work. There should be serious planning and discussion at the local level and with the dean; there will be ongoing evaluation and reporting at the central level.

This is about important values and tradeoffs, Dr. Bruininks told the Committee. He said he could be persuaded that a unit needs serious reallocation but he would want discussion about what people in new positions would do. This document will help frame and focus the conversation.

Professor Speaks said it is essential to get the document adopted and implemented soon while recognizing that it may need to be revisited.

Professor Feeney raised the question of funding for tenure-track lines when only a small amount of state funds or tuition are involved. This is an issue of particular concern to the Academic Health Center, which in some units has little state funding but has large amounts of external research funding. Dr. Bruininks said there would have to be a financial analysis; the University should not make a 30-year tenure commitment on the basis of a 4-5-year grant. There is a fear outside the Academic Health Center about tenuring faculty on non-state funds, Professor Feeney observed; that fear is legitimate, Dr. Bruininks said, because there have been bailouts in the past. This document requires accountability of units that rely on more than O&M funds and tuition.

One reason there is confidence about positions based on federal funding is because that funding has been increasing, Professor Hamilton said, but there should be hard funds to back up people appointed on soft money. He has raised this issue, Professor Feeney said; there needs to be a clearer definition of what the AHC is doing and where it is going.

Professor Ahern now maintained that the guidelines could make it easier to use non-regular faculty, although the changes proposed at this meeting may make that result less likely. The other SCEP issue, he said, is the place of tenure. SCEP wishes to see the policy make secure the role of tenured faculty in making decisions in departments.

The problem the University has had, Vice President Carrier explained, is the lack of ANY articulated guidelines to control the spread of non-regular faculty appointments. This document provides the context to raise questions. Given what the University has lived with the past few years, she said, she is optimistic about the results from the adoption of the guidelines. Professor Ahern expressed the hope that she was right, and observed that this problem was not created by the Board of Regents or the central administration; it often comes from the units themselves.

Professor Morrison suggested that in the statement of principles there be added a sentence about the importance of the tenure system.

After discussion about the position of Education Specialist (it will continue to exist but those who hold it will not be people whose primary responsibility is instruction), the Committee agreed that the issue should be brought to the Senate for information and action, the latter depending on how the Senate Committee on Faculty Affairs and the Senate Committee on Educational Policy react to the revised documents.

2. Other Business

Dr. Bruininks next reported briefly on the results of visits he has made to the Crookston campus and on the plans that have flowed from the work of the Collins Committee reviewing campus governance and other issues. He concluded that things are moving in the right direction but said he would like to have the reaction of the Committee to the proposed workplan.

3. Report from an AAUP Conference

Professor Massey now turned to Professor Gonzales, who had attended a conference on faculty governance sponsored jointly by the AAUP and academic deans.

This was the first nationally-sponsored such meeting, Professor Gonzales reported, and the first in a long time that brought faculty together with deans and provosts on this topic. She said there were a number of common themes and points of information.

-- She was disappointed in the results until she thought about fact that this was one of the first occasions the two groups had been brought together to talk about problems, such as increased corporatization of the university and its impact on faculty governance and, to the extent more efficiency and flexibility are demanded, how faculty governance gets in the way of achieving those demands.

-- The complexity of demands on the presidents of large research universities requires a set of skills and preparation that faculty do not develop and are largely not interested in; as a result, the president tends to draw more on outsiders for support and counsel.

-- The institutional reward structure is an impediment to socializing young faculty into governance; young faculty are more cosmopolitan (i.e., oriented away from the institution) and in their academic life do more in their discipline; another concern is the impact on governance (at all levels--departmental, collegiate, institutional) of the erosion in the numbers of regular faculty.

-- She was happy that things are nowhere as bad at the University of Minnesota as they could be; there are large universities where faculty bodies such as this do not have regular conversations with senior administrators.

-- There are plans for annual meetings. Mary Burgan, the Executive Director of the AAUP, hopes that more time will be spent working on solutions rather than lamenting and identifying the problems.

4. Discussion with Professor Marshak

Professor Marshak next reported on several matters. The deadline for nominating individuals to serve on the Board of Regents is December 1. There are now five openings (one more than expected after the death of Regent Peterson); one will be a student, one is from the Fifth Congressional District, and the other three are at large. He urged his colleagues to think about and nominate people for the Board.

Professor Massey inquired if Regent Spence would continue as chair of the Board. Professor Marshak said that depends on whether she is re-elected; if she is, her term as chair will continue to June, at which point the Board elects its chair and vice-chair. If she is not re-elected to the Board, the Board will have to elect a new chair or the vice chair will become chair, because newly-elected Regents take office immediately after election by the legislature.

Professor Marshak also reported that the Genomics building has \$6.5 million in unanticipated infrastructure costs (connecting it to the steam lines). He said it is likely the University will be questioned by the legislature on buildings that it has not built but for which the legislature has appropriated funds.

Professor Massey adjourned the meeting at 3:00.

-- Gary Engstrand

University of Minnesota