Minutes[*]

Senate Committee on Educational Policy
Wednesday, February 28, 2007
1:30 – 3:30
238A Morrill Hall

Present: Richard McCormick (chair), LeAnn Alstadt, William Bart, Vernon Cardwell, Megan
                 Cummings, (George Green for) Gail Dubrow, April Knutson, James Leger, Guy
                 Merolle, Peh Ng, Paul Siliciano, Donna Spannaus-Martin, Craig Swan, Molly
                 Tolzmann, Cathrine Wambach, Joel Weinsheimer

Absent: Maureen Cisneros, Claudia Neuhauser, Douglas Wangensteen,

Guests: David Langley (Center for Teaching and Learning); Thomas Dohm (Director,
                 Measurement Services)

Other: none

[In these minutes: (1) new student evaluation of instruction report and questions; (2) chapter from
Bok's book, "Preparation for Citizenship; (3) chapter from Bok's book, "Diversity"]

1.   New Student Evaluation of Instruction Report and Questions

         Professor McCormick convened the meeting at 1:30 and reminded Committee members that
last year when this Committee brought the consolidated course-evaluation policy to the Senate (which
it adopted), there was discontent expressed about the standard evaluation questions that had been used
since the early 1990s. There has been a lot of research on course evaluation since then, and there was
a sense the University should take advantage of that research, so this Committee and the Senate
Committee on Faculty Affairs appointed a joint subcommittee to look at the research and make
recommendations accordingly. He introduced David Langley, who served as chair of the
subcommittee, to make a report. The Committee has just received the report, so will take no action
today, but he said Dr. Langley would review its contents.

         Dr. Langley reviewed the work of the subcommittee, which held 10 meetings over 5 months
and did a lot of emailing, thinking, and talking. He reported that the subcommittee went through a
series of 12 steps to complete its work and had to wrestle with a lot of personal assumptions held by
members of the subcommittee. The steps identified in the report were as follows (the language is all
taken directly from the report, so should be considered to have quotation marks around it; *comments
by Dr. Langley about the report at this meeting are inserted in italics*).

Step 1: Outline the strengths and limitations of the current SET form(s).

A critical examination of the SET form yields the following conclusions:

A. Strengths:

      1. The form is designed with a set of "core" items (items required across all rating forms at the University), a sound approach advocated by experts in teaching evaluation (Arreola, 2006).
      2. The form includes space for additional (optional) questions as well as written comments, expanding the assessment beyond the four core statements.

B. Limitations:

      1. The form lacks coherence, i.e., a guiding conceptual framework that rationalizes how teaching and learning relate to one another.
      2. A large number of alternative forms exist, a sign of discontent with the goals or intent of the standard SET form.
      3. The student's responsibility for learning is not strongly emphasized. The core statements and many optional statements place direct attention on the pedagogical acts of the instructor but not on the student learning that should result from these acts.
      4. Core item 1 ("How would you rate the instructor's overall teaching ability?") is a common example of a global item seen on other rating forms. The advantage of these items simultaneously points to their major disadvantage. While the score of one global item can result in an efficient evaluation for personnel committees, the item tends to be relied upon as a single proxy measure of instructional performance. In addition, the general focus of this item makes it difficult to determine what "overall teaching ability" means to different students. Finally, there is little to no diagnostic value for a teacher who scores medium to low on this item compared to items that measure specific aspects of teaching (Arreola, 2006).
      5. Core item 2 ("How would you rate the instructor's knowledge of the subject matter?") is a question that is more appropriate for peer (faculty) assessment (Arreola, 2006; Eder, 2006).
      6. Core item 3 ("How would you rate the instructor's respect and concern for students?") conflates two constructs (respect and concern) within a single item.
      7. The seven point scale does not have verbal markers on each item, reducing the reliability of the overall scale.
      8. The current form is not connected with a systematic process for instructional improvement.

Step 2: Outline appropriate options to meet the goals of the review.

The committee considered the following options:

Option
1. **Retain the current SET form** or **provide minor adjustments in wording**
Rejected. It is widely acknowledged that the current form needs major adjustments (e.g., different items) that are consistent with solid research and good practice. The previous section also rationalizes the committee's decision to reject this option.
2. **Obtain a commercial instrument**
Rejected. New ongoing costs to the University and the strictly "teacher-centered" orientation of most instruments were important considerations in rejecting this option.
3. Adopt best practices used by   other universities
Partially accepted. Universities tend to adopt commercial forms or construct their own approaches. Methods that are central to good practice were reviewed but are better accommodated under Option 4.

4. **Construct a new form based on scholarly literature and the unique needs of the University**
Accepted. A new form was built based on a scholarly review of the literature and the flexibility
needed to address the wide range of instructional formats at the university.

Step 3: Establish criteria to generate a new instrument.

Based in part on recommendations from Arreola (2006), an effective student rating form should:
1.   acknowledge the joint responsibility of teachers and students for student learning
2.   address teaching practices known to promote student engagement with the content
3.   reflect a conceptual framework of teaching and learning
4.   be connected to larger issues in higher education and with current initiatives on campus
5.   focus on both summative and formative aspects of teaching
6.   be flexible/adaptable to allow for appropriate use by diverse courses
7.   use language that is specific, direct, short, and understandable for the reader
8.   include a strong diagnostic feedback element to address instructional improvement
9.   apply to both classroom and online environments if possible

The key item here was #1, Dr. Langley said, the idea of joint responsibility. Many instruments
are teacher-centered, while the one they propose is more conscious of the joint responsibility.

Step 4: Delineate the essential differences between teacher-centered and learning-centered
rating forms.

Numerous calls have been made to re-examine traditional approaches to teaching in higher education
settings (Bain, 2004; Barr & Tagg, 1995; Bok, 2006; Fink, 2003). Barr and Tagg's classic article
called for a shift from the belief that a college is an institution that "exists to provide instruction" to an
institution that "exists to produce learning" (p. 13). Specific to student rating of instruction, Bok
(2006) indicated that professors seldom receive clear evidence on how much students believe they
have learned in a course. Instead, student rating forms usually focus on whether the instructor was
knowledgeable, accessible, or other teacher characteristics.

Appropriate changes in the wording of a rating statement, however, can help students examine their
role <u>as learners</u> at the end of the semester. Table 1 compares the basic differences between teacher-
centered statements and learning-centered statements. Because student learning is a joint responsibility
of the student and the instructor, the core items reflect both types of statements.

Both kinds of statements are included in the proposed form, Dr. Langley pointed out.

Step 5: Adopt a conceptual framework to categorize rating items.

The committee examined eight frameworks that bear on the relationship between teaching and
learning. The conceptual framework chosen reflects the proposed University of Minnesota
Undergraduate Learning Outcomes (2007; see Table 2). These outcomes indicate that upon reception
of a bachelor's degree, students
 1. have mastered a body of knowledge and mode of inquiry
 2. have the ability to locate and evaluate information critically
 3. can identify, define, and solve problems

4. have the ability to communicate effectively
5. understand diverse philosophies and cultures in a global society
6. understand the role of creativity, innovation, discovery, and expression across the disciplines
7. have acquired skills for effective citizenship and life-long learning

Rationale for the Framework
A well-publicized report from the U. S. Department of Education (2006) contends that the majority of U.S. colleges and universities have not been held accountable for measuring student learning outcomes. A unique approach to respond to this charge is to use the University's Undergraduate Learning Outcomes as a tool for assessing instructional performance. In essence, the seven outcomes can serve as categories for aligning student rating statements. Two valued ends are simultaneously achieved through this approach: a) instructional performance is deliberately tied to student learning, and b) rating scores represent one form of a systematic, campus-wide assessment of student learning outcomes.

Learning outcomes for graduate students have not been developed at most U. S. universities. As presently conceived, however, the proposed rating system can accommodate the goals of most graduate education coursework. In particular, outcomes 1-4 and 6 are highly relevant to the structure of most graduate courses.

The goal is to address things that are important for student learning (both undergraduate and graduate), Dr. Langley said, and that approach structured the nature of the questions they would allow to be used.

Step 6: Determine the scope of statements that are appropriate for student assessment in the rating form.

Arreola (2006), Eder (2006), and Theall (personal communication) suggest that students can be considered reliable and first hand judges of the following:

1. Teacher/student relationships (including rapport, respect for students, etc)
2. Creation of a supportive classroom environment and the management of that environment
3. Instructional delivery variables (e.g., usefulness of feedback, clarity of language)
4. Issues on the level of student engagement (e.g., amount of effort expended, time spent on studying, workload, and difficulty)
5. Congruence between assessment measures (tests) and what was taught in the course
6. Level of access to the instructor
7. Extent to which the syllabus served as a reliable guide for the course

In contrast, faculty peers are considered reliable judges of:
1. Content expertise of the faculty member
2. Relationship of the course to the overall curriculum or program
3. Course design issues such as
   A. Appropriateness and currency of the content
   B. Appropriateness of course objectives
   C. Appropriateness of teaching methodology in relation to course goals
   D. Overall organization and logic behind the course structure

E.
The guidelines listed above were used to derive appropriate statements for the proposed rating form.

This is a reminder, Dr. Langley told the Committee, that students can judge some things but not others. Faculty are the best judge of content, for example, so there is no question on content expertise.

Step 7: Account for additional parameters to meet Senate policy on teaching.

The current Senate policy on the evaluation of teaching outlines the three-fold purpose of the form: (1) to improve instruction, (2) to provide information for (a) salary and promotion decisions based on merit and (b) faculty tenure decisions, and (3) to assist students in course selection. The proposed forms (early-semester and end-of-semester) focus on meeting these three purposes. Instructional improvement is primarily examined on the early semester assessment. Because the six core items are meant to be universal across courses, these items seem most appropriate for comparisons that are important for personnel committees. Finally, course selection items are addressed through the recommended student release questions.

Step 8: Determine core items that are appropriate across different instructional formats and establish their research basis. [Note that there are two open-ended questions also suggested, in the fifth paragraph following.]

Our goals for item selection focused on resolving two questions: 1) What items are most likely to be universal across different instructional formats? 2) Is there a research basis to connect each item to principles of effective teaching and learning? Both criteria provided strong constraints on the pool of potential items. After extensive deliberation among committee members representing diverse disciplines, six items were chosen:

1. I received useful feedback on my work.
2. My interest in the subject matter was stimulated by this course.
3. I have a deeper understanding of the subject matter as a result of this course.
4. This instructor treated me with respect.
5. This instructor explained the subject matter clearly.
6. This instructor was well-prepared for class.

A learning-centered and teacher-centered focus is evident in the stems for these items. Table 3 provides the research support for placing these items on the end of semester rating form and connects the items to the focus and intent of three undergraduate learning outcomes.

One important limitation of using a minimal number of core items is that while each item measures a specific characteristic (e.g., clarity), the reliability of an item to measure that characteristic usually requires a minimum of three items and appropriate factor loadings through factor analysis (Arreola, 2006). Thus, the reliability of the form would be strengthened with a larger number of core items associated with a given characteristic of teaching.

Finally, all end-of-semester forms also include space for written comments from the students. Two written options are listed in the Table: a) I learned best when the instructor (fill in the blank), and b)

To succeed in this class, my recommendations for incoming students would be (fill in the blank). The first statement provides a valuable, learning-focused response to the instructor, while the second comment provides additional information for future course development. Instructors are not restricted to the two questions provided and are welcome to add their course-specific questions.

One can ask how the subcommittee decided on these six items, Dr. Langley said, and why there are not more or fewer. Reaching agreement on these items was a struggle. Many instruments are much longer, but the subcommittee concluded these six questions deal with concepts that have been around for a long time (feedback, student interest, learning, respectfulness, clarity, preparation & organization).

Step 9: Develop a balanced and defensible measurement scale.

The current SET form has a seven level scale with verbal markers at the beginning, middle, and end. The length of the scale and the lack of markers for each number in the scale impact the reliability of the responses.

A good measurement scale is balanced, i.e., parallel values above and below the center point (Arreola, 2006). Many different terms are possible for the scale, but a common approach is to examine the level of agreement or disagreement with an item. Scales with four, five, or six levels were considered. The terms chosen and associated point value was Strongly Agree (6), Agree (5), Somewhat Agree (4), Somewhat Disagree (3), Disagree (2), and Strongly Disagree (1). The six point scale is expected to appropriately discriminate between qualitatively different levels of teaching expertise as rated by students. Each point has a verbal marker, in contrast to the current SET form.

Based on this proposed scale, a final score report returned to instructors would involve (as a minimum) the mean score on each of the six items listed under Step 8 and a seventh score (the mean of the core items). This seventh score represents an appropriate reporting of "overall effectiveness" since it is based on data assumed to capture the essential elements of instruction. If instructors add additional items for student ratings (see Step 12), we recommend that the measure of overall effectiveness be constrained to the core items for consistency across the university.

Forms such as this always have 4, 5, or 6 choices, and an odd number would allow a midpoint that is neither agree nor disagree. There was not unanimous agreement on the scale but there was strong agreement. This is a forced-choice scale; students must agree or disagree.

Step 10: Initiate development of a bank of statements that are aligned with the framework.

A bank of optional statements is under development for instructor use, and the statements are being specifically aligned with the undergraduate learning outcomes. Different courses are likely to focus on specific learning outcomes, and the bank will allow instructors to make item selections in relation to the goals of a particular course. Second, if departments and colleges choose to aggregate results across courses, the university has a unique method to assess how well undergraduate students are meeting the outcomes on a regular basis.

It is strongly recommended that any new items should address the criteria outlined in Step 3 from this report. In addition, since new items need to be incorporated into scoring and reporting programs, a

review committee (including representatives from the Office of Measurement Services and the Center for Teaching and Learning) can help ensure minimal item duplication across
different colleges and ensure that additional diagnostic information is developed to address the focus of these items.

This work is not complete, Dr. Langley reported.

Step 11: Provide suggestions for student release statements.

Student release statements have been a staple in the modicum of rating forms at the University in the recent past. Their purpose has been to assist students with course selection in subsequent semesters, though it is not known to what degree students use this information judiciously. The current student release statements (recently revised but not yet in practice) include 18 items associated with effort, difficulty, and many teacher characteristics.

Table 4 is a proposed and reduced set of student release statements that may assist students in course selection. The statements focus on broad issues of student concern such as workload, grading, instructional standards, and whether the course can be recommended to incoming students. We recommend that appropriate University factions examine this reduced list in light of other information sources that students currently use to gauge course appropriateness. For example, the Class Search function on One Stop (followed by clicking on the Course Guide) allows the user to examine an extensive description of the course, percentage of class time in lecture or discussion, reading and writing workload, percentage of grade associated with a particular assessment form, and exam format. The proposed course release statements should serve to augment this website in addressing student questions about course selection.

Current Senate policy prohibits the release of these statements unless faculty provide approval. While we concur with this policy, we encourage faculty to strongly consider the usefulness of the four proposed statements for students as well as the information value that can be gleaned for teacher development.

There are currently 18 student-release questions; the subcommittee recommends they limit them to a smaller number. What are students most interested in? Probably effort, challenge, and grading.

Step 12: Provide an (optional) early semester form focused on instructional development and early feedback.

Table 5 is an optional, early semester form that includes the six core items and five open-ended statements for written commentary by students. The six core items have minor rewordings to reflect the current status of the course within the semester. The focus of the early semester form is instructional development; inclusion of the six core items provides an opportunity to examine progress in relation to the final semester form. In addition, the five open-ended statements provide faculty with valuable insights into student learning issues that can be addressed in the remaining weeks of the semester.

We strongly encourage faculty and instructional staff to use the early semester form in weeks 4-6 as opposed to mid-semester (week 8). In particular, early feedback on the core items may well allow the instructor to adjust instructional strategies to impact the ratings provided on the final semester form. As indicated by current Senate policy, results of the early semester form are confidential and are strictly meant for instructor use.

The mid-semester form should probably be used during the 4th-6th week, Dr. Langley said, for the answers to be helpful and developmental in that course.

The questions did not come easily, Dr. Langley said, and they struggled over the wording, but they now have the best wording they can get. Faculty may add questions that are specific for their course, which the subcommittee encourages faculty to do.

Professor Weinsheimer, who served on the subcommittee, thanked Dr. Langley for his thoughtful and courteous leadership in dealing with a difficult topic. Professor McCormick expressed the thanks of the Committee to Dr. Langley and to the other members of the subcommittee: Professors Elizabeth Kautz, Steven McLoon, Peh Ng, and Joel Weinsheimer, and to Dr. Dohm, Director of the Office of Measurement Services.

Professor McCormick recalled that the Student Senate developed the new student-release questions, which have not appeared on any student evaluation forms because new forms will not be printed until the new questions from the Langley subcommittee have been adopted. The Faculty Senate delegated to this Committee and the Student Senate authority to approve the final student-release questions, and the students worked with Professor Michael Rodriguez to develop and pilot their questions. It would be necessary to involve the Student Senate to change the student-release questions.

Professor Siliciano expressed appreciation for the work of the subcommittee and said he made comments only with great trepidation. He said he worried that with an even-numbered scale, and no option to neither agree nor disagree, there would be error introduced into the results. He said he would prefer to see a "neither" option. He also said that the first question ("I received useful feedback on my work") would be difficult for instructors in big classes that rely on a lot of multiple-choice tests. The only feedback is the form. Neither the faculty nor the students are happy with that kind of feedback, but the question results will hurt instructors teaching large introductory courses that are not set up for individual feedback.

Ms. Cummings asked if anyone besides the instructor sees the results. They do, Professor McCormick said; the department head, any department merit committee, promotion and tenure committees. And it is those committees and people who give raises, Professor Siliciano observed. Everyone senior in rank sees the results, Dean Green said, as well as the college promotion and tenure committee, the dean, the provost, staff. Not everyone will see all the comments but they will see the statistics, and if there is something controversial, they will read that as well.

Professor Wambach asked about question #5 ("This instructor explained the subject matter clearly). How would it work in hybrid courses where the content is on line, that do not have a traditional lecture, and work occurs with students on projects. What conversations did they have about that? What is the most likely role a faculty member will be in in his or her role as an instructor, Dr.

Langley asked? He answered himself: in explaining something, whether by lecture, writing, or on line. An explanation is coming from somewhere, and that concept led them to the wording of the question. He said it should cover the huge majority of faculty instruction and he does not know how it would be revised for on-line work. Everyone thought of potential exceptions to the questions, Professor Weinsheimer commented, which may be an argument for a "neither agree nor disagree" option. In 95% of courses, however, the instructor explains something. This is also what happens when there is a set of core items; with a supplemental question bank, faculty members can get at other issues in which they are interested, Dr. Langley said.

Professor McCormick said he did not want to see a neutral point on the scale; students should not be encouraged to hedge. The results are more meaningful if students are forced to choose—but there could be a "not applicable" option. Dr. Dohm said that could be added, and the question on the forms where students selected that option would not be counted in reporting the percentages.

Ms. Alstadt asked if there was a reason the feedback question was first. Dr. Langley said the order of the questions could be different, if one looks at the chronology of a course. The subcommittee did not consider the order, Dr. Dohm reported, but said he would prefer that one order be chosen so that they did not have to print multiple forms with questions in different order on different forms. Dr. Langley suggested a reordering that the Committee accepted.

Apropos Professor Siliciano's concern, Professor McCormick said that every department teaches large courses. The instructors teaching them receive lower ratings, Professor Siliciano said; that is already true, Professor McCormick responded.

Professor McCormick said he was not certain that the questions are learner-centered, except for #2 ("My interest in the subject matter was stimulated by this course) and #3 (I have a deeper understanding of the subject matter as a result of this course). They tried for three learner-centered and three teacher-centered questions, Dr. Langley said, and any of them could be rewritten so they are learner-centered, and they could all be one or the other. The subcommittee believed that both types should be included. Dean Green said that since they will be used for evaluation, they should be teacher-centered. Professor McCormick said he agreed with a mix.

Dr. Langley said the subcommittee decided to eliminate a global question; any mean score for an instructor will be based on the real data from all six questions.

Ms. Alstadt suggested changing the feedback question ("1. I received useful feedback on my work") to make it learner-centered, such as "I was able effectively to use feedback." Most students will see that as a reference to the tests. Those are very different questions, Dr. Langley observed; "the instructor gave" versus "I used" feedback. The latter is very strongly learner-oriented. As it is, it could be that the student only got a test back with a grade, Ms. Alstadt said; a learner-centered question would indicate the student received useful help. The questions are very generic because there are so many different kinds of classes and feedback mechanisms, Dr. Langley said. That is what one gets with the core questions: homogenized responses.

There is nothing on evaluation and the questions speak only to instructional strategy, Professor Cardwell pointed out. In large classes and small ones, each teacher develops strategies that work for them. No question addresses whether or not the strategy affected student learning. Did the instructor

disclose the strategy, Dean Green asked? One cannot assume that most do, he said; most instructors do not say why they designed the course as they did. The students' perception may be different from that of the instructor, Professor Cardwell responded. The subcommittee did not talk specifically about that point, Dr. Langley said; it would be possible to add a question about it. An open-ended question could also address it, Professor McCormick said.

Professor Wambach said the subcommittee should take Ms. Alstadt's question to heart and should make the feedback question learner-centered. Instructors and peers can look; the question is how and if students use feedback. The question would also then be less charged for the instructor, Professor McCormick added. Students could be satisfied; the current wording of the question invites punishment.

In the current system, larger classes do not get feedback as good as smaller classes, Professor McCormick repeated. Professor Siliciano said he was not sure whether some programs put their most engaging instructors in large classes.

Dr. Knutson thanked the subcommittee for getting rid of the over-arching first question on the current form. She said she knows of departments that use only that first question for evaluation purposes for TAs and deciding on merit pay for P&A instructional staff. Now departments that rely on one number will use the average of the response to all six questions, Professor McCormick and Dean Green commented simultaneously.

This report will go next to the Senate Committee on Faculty Affairs, Professor McCormick said. After that it will go to the Faculty Consultative Committee and the Faculty Senate. This report cannot pre-empt the student-release questions already approved by the Student Senate, he added. His recommendation is that the Committee not try to change the student-release questions, which might only delay implementation of the report even more. He said he appreciated the recommendation for the pared-down version of student-release questions from the subcommittee, but the Student Senate put in a lot of work on the questions and this Committee put off implementing them for a year in order to revise the core questions. It is acceptable that there is overlap between the student-release and core questions because the students do not see the results for the core questions.

Professor Leger shared the concern expressed by Professor Siliciano about feedback; rather than "I received useful feedback on my work," he suggested the question should speak to "appropriate" feedback. That might be a test score. Students might misunderstand this question and it is a big concern for large classes. He agreed that it would be a better question if it were made learner-centered. Professor Spannaus-Martin agreed; she said she teaches three small courses, and only in two of them would students receive "useful" feedback.

Vice Provost Swan commented that in the second open-ended question ("To succeed in this class, my recommendations for incoming students would be (fill in the blank)") the term "incoming" could be ambiguous for students. He suggested "for students who would take this course in the future."

Professor Wambach asked if it would be possible to treat the new form/questions as a pilot project for a year, to see if it works, and then agree to keep it in place for some length of time. Professor Weinsheimer spoke emphatically in favor of Professor Wambach's comment, and said he

would like to see a standing committee on the student evaluation of teaching and the forms used up for periodic review. There are changes in views about student evaluation that should be taken into account. He would like to know that this Committee will review the process in the future. Professor McCormick assured him the Committee would be watching it. Dr. Swan also agreed with Professor Wambach's point; student evaluations are an important part of faculty evaluation, he said, and if there is a lack of stability in the instruments, making changes is a big deal and they should not be made lightly.

Professor McCormick noted that the Senate insisted that the students pilot the student-release questions; it is reasonable for the Committee to do the same with the new core questions. Vice Provost Swan said he would be comfortable supporting a pilot if the Committee were to endorse it. Dr. Dohm said if senior faculty could be identified, his office could run a pilot project this spring. That will provide information for the Faculty Senate in the fall, Dr. Swan said. The final version can be prepared after the March 27 meeting of the Senate Committee on Faculty Affairs and the March 28 meeting of this Committee, Professor McCormick said.

Professor McCormick thanked Dr. Langley for joining the meeting.

2.   Chapter Seven, Bok's Book. *Our Underachieving Colleges***: Preparation for Citizenship**

Professor Siliciano led a discussion of chapter seven of Derek Bok's book. He distributed a handout to Committee members, excerpts from which follow.

"'Democracy has to be born anew every generation, and education is its midwife' John Dewey" was the opening salvo. Professor Siliciano said that parts of the chapter were chilling. "Voter turnout has declined over the past 50 years, with barely 50% of eligible Americans voting in presidential elections. Young adults are less likely to vote than older citizens, with less than 40% of 18-24-year-olds casting votes. Furthermore, young adults are poorly informed about political issues and public affairs. Bok cites this lack of engagement as a serious problem: those with more extreme views are more likely to vote, leaving the opinions of more moderate citizens under-represented." And some groups are more effective at mobilizing voters, Professor Siliciano pointed out.

"Do colleges play a role in this problem? While many states mandate high school courses in civics (which are not shown to be effective at motivating students to vote), few colleges promote civic education directly. Some colleges wish to avoid contentious issues; some assume a civic education is a natural side product of the standard undergraduate curriculum. These assumptions must be true at some level, as college graduates are more likely to vote, volunteer, and discuss politics than high-school graduates without college degrees.
"Much of this improvement, however, comes from non-academic sources (participation in student government, debate teams, etc.). Only one-third of students take a politics course, and only one-tenth take a course in international affairs. Especially worrisome is the observation that some courses of study seem to decrease civic participation: the more business, science, and engineering courses a student takes, the less likely they are to participate in political processes or community service." This is troublesome, Professor Siliciano commented, especially since many issues relate to science and personal freedom.

2. What should colleges do? Colleges could give students the tools to be good citizens and participate in civic affairs. Some of these tools are developed in other parts of the curriculum. For example, students learn to analyze data, solve problems, be tolerant and respectful of others, etc., in many different courses. However, a course in American democracy should be considered. Such a course would cover the structure of our government, an individual's rights and responsibilities, personal freedoms and the public welfare. Students should also learn about practical politics in our time by covering subjects such as modern political parties and campaign finance.

"Bok feels that such a course should be mandatory. He argues that many students won't use the chemistry or foreign language course they were required to take, but all will be citizens. Bok notes that the design of the course in American democracy must avoid 'indoctrination' of any particular point of view.

"Finally, Bok argues that colleges should promote and encourage political discussions in non-academic ways, from placing value on student government to sponsoring debates and speakers to lead by example." And they should lead by example in the decisions institutional leaders make, Professor Siliciano added. He also said Bok finds it surprising colleges do not more put more emphasis on requiring understanding of democracy.

Vice Provost Swan reported that 80% of the graduating seniors who completed the senior exit survey say they vote, so the University's results are high by comparison to Bok's statistics. There is a group in the Carlson School urging creation of a major in non-profit management. The Committee has heard about the program in community service, in which about 200 students participate. Professor McCormick also recalled that the Committee heard from Dr. Bloomfield about the many public engagement activities occurring at the University, so perhaps there is cause for hope.

Committee members (faculty, students and staff) related various ways they are involved in community/civic affairs.

Dean Green said he believed a mandated course would be a reduction in quality at the University because there is already a lot of public engagement taking place, including a lot of student activities that the faculty are not involved in. There are things more effective than a mandated course. There are many wonderful things happening and a course would be a step backwards. In a previous chapter of the book, Professor Cardwell recalled, Bok said the faculty and university "walk the talk" by example—sponsoring debates and seminars and showing up at them.

Professor McCormick said the University needs to think about how to measure the outcomes. There are a lot of voluntary activities occurring, but should there be more incentives? This issue is related to the strategic-positioning goal of fulfilling the urban land-grant university role; part of the mission is to be useful to the state, and getting students involved would be one outcome.

Ms. Alstadt reported that in three of her four classes there had been discussion about voting, and in one large lecture class the instructor allowed students to leave to go vote. She said a lot of instructors emphasize voting. Professor McCormick related that he gives extra credit to students who come to class wearing the red "I voted" sticker.

Are there things the University is not doing that it should, Dr. Swan asked? The University just at the beginning of developing its public engagement profile, Dean Green said, and it has enormous potential in departments and majors; it is like undergraduate research in a policy-making

vein. They have just begun to design public engagement in the curriculum and for independent study, and that avenue has enormous unfulfilled potential. Those options are better than a required course.

Professor McCormick expressed the hope it would be possible to harness science and engineering students' expertise at problem-solving in order to help see their skills are needed for activities involved in the community, not just getting a job. A key element for people in the sciences, Professor Spannaus-Martin said, is to get them to realize how things like the legislative process can affect their profession and how they can participate.

3.   Chapter Eight, Bok's Book. *Our Underachieving Colleges***: Diversity**

Although it was near the end of the meeting, Professor McCormick asked Professor Spannaus-Martin to quickly run through her summary of the chapter on diversity, with the promise that the Committee would discuss the issues at a future meeting.

History of Diversity in U.S. Colleges

In 1906: a homogeneous WASP, females (but not at leading private colleges); immigrants, Catholics, Jews, modest in numbers but increasing; it was rare to see blacks, Asian Americans, Hispanics
Now: more than 50% of students are females, 10% black, 8% Asian, 7% Hispanic, 3% outside U.S.

Increased diversity broadens student experiences, improves critical thinking, students become more civically active.
Increased diversity increases conflict, more racial slurs, anti-gay discrimination, sexual harassment.
Increased diversity increases the demand for colleges to have increased diversity in faculty and increase in number of cultural diversity courses.

Employers are looking for graduates who can work in and with diverse groups.

Colleges need to be proactive, help students understand the differences.

Blacks and Whites

It is not just about academics (finding enough blacks capable of college work and giving them financial aid). By the 1960s, universities wanted black faculty, black employees, black history and culture courses.

Diversity didn't mean harmony.

Today, 90% of white students and 50% of black students come from racially homogeneous school, many of the remainder have unpleasant memories of diversity (colleges are more diverse, but public schools are more segregated than they were in the 1970s). Blacks sat at black tables and wanted separate dorms, separate social events. Whites didn't make campus more welcoming, or those who tried often came off as condescending.

To help smooth integration, colleges:
1. Initiated speech codes - struck down by judges

2. Added racial awareness programs for freshmen
3. Mandatory courses on diversity

There has been mixed opinion about the success rate of these activities.

The good: signs of separateness (black tables, etc.) are decreasing; there is increased tolerance and cultural awareness; there are increased numbers who are aware of the issues.

The bad: there are still black tables; there are still racist remarks; there is discomfort at being singled out to give the "black perspective."

There is progress in most places, increased racial understanding, openness to diversity, but progress is slow (and has been slowing since the 1990s).

If black tables still exist, there is still social interaction between tables.

In 1989: most students (60% of whites, 70% of blacks) felt college contributed "greatly" or "a fair amount" to their ability to work effectively across cultures; there was student support for class diversity; 69% of students said they had a friend of another race (no year given). In the 1990s only 16% said all friends were the same race

Racial segregation may have been exaggerated (football players, band members, drama majors also sit at same tables)

There is a mixed verdict:
--   More racial mixing than most admit, but tensions persist
--   Students blame students, not faculty and administrators
--   Increasing minority enrollment, minority faculty does not help; there is need for courses and workshops
--   If activities are voluntary, one is preaching to the choir; if mandatory, whites feel accused of bigotry. There is need for sustained contact under certain conditions: equal status, mutual goals (not competition), visible approval of authority

Page 209, Susan Gmelch: "To expect students of color not to want to want to group together on the basis of common background and interests would be to hold colleges up to an unrealistically high standard of racial and ethnic integration."

The role of colleges in diversity: promote healthy interactions between races; use racial incidents as teachable moments (e.g., prepare residence hall staff); if racial tensions are widespread, establish safe havens; otherwise most students commented that if they had a place to withdraw (Third World Center), they would have missed many learning opportunities

Also, although inclusion sets the tone to learn from one another, officials should help set up culture-related activities, but not exclude other races

Men and Women

History: women entered colleges after the Civil War to prepare for academic or professional careers (primarily teachers); by 1900, 71% of women in college were at coed institutions; fewer than 50% of women graduates married, compared to 90% of other women.

As social contact increased, universities imposed rules to regulate the interactions between men and women. Romantic involvements were formed, not friendships (separate dormitories, etc.). After WWII there was a drop in enrollment of female Ph.D.s, M.D.s, lawyers. In the 1960s, female enrollment increased, at the time of the sexual revolution, legalization of abortion, and availability of oral contraceptives.

Colleges experimented with housing men and women in same residence halls. The arrangements affected relationships; close friendships formed. Casual sex became more common and there were fewer traditional dates, more informal groups. Most students liked coed dorms for more reasons than easy sex

15-30% college women experienced rape or attempted rape, 80% knew the perpetrator, 60% involved date rape, and alcohol is usually involved

Institutions need to make campus safer: lighting and call boxes (which cuts down on robberies, but not on unwanted sex); self-defense classes, assertiveness training, and warnings not to walk alone, drink less, don't go to fraternities unescorted (which puts all the responsibility on the woman)

Also need to respond to the male culture: a disproportionate percentage of assaults involve men from particular fraternities, athletic teams, or all-male residences that breed the macho attitude. Those attitudes were firmly in place before college and are difficult to change.

Institutions should have programs to limit drinking, impose penalties, and encourage preventive measures.

Interpersonal Relations

Collaboration, persuasion, negotiation
Expand capacities for leadership
Improve listening
Improve insight into feelings and motivation of others

Interpersonal competence: Vital to student, employers demand it

Is teaching interpersonal relations teaching skills (or manipulation)? (isn't writing?)
Students want these skills.
More and more of the elements of education important to undergraduates is relegated to instructors (grad students) not selected with care.
The issues are probably addressed by the gradual accumulation of courses.

Page 224: "The question for America's colleges, then, will not be whether to pay serious attention to interpersonal relations. Rather the choice will be whether colleges continue to address the subject in a

piece-meal, uncoordinated fashion or whether they acknowledge it is an important aim of college and try to weave its disparate elements in to an effective, integrated whole."

Professor McCormick adjourned the meeting at 3:35.

-- Gary Engstrand

University of Minnesota