

Minutes*

Faculty Consultative Committee
Monday, June 14, 1999
12:15 – 2:30
Law School

Present: Sara Evans (chair), Kent Bales, Linda Brady, Mary Dempsey, Marilyn Grave, Stephen Gudeman, David Hamilton, Roberta Humphreys, Michael Korth, Leonard Kuhi, Joseph Massey, Judith Martin, Fred Morrison, V. Rama Murthy, Matthew Tirrell

Absent: Gary Davis, M. Janice Hogan, Marvin Marshak

[In these minutes: salaries, the work of task forces, upcoming issues, committee business]

The Faculty Consultative Committee had lunch with the Deans in the Rare Books Room of the Law School for 90 minutes. Following lunch, Professors Morrison and Hamilton, Executive Vice President Bruininks, Dean Thomas Sullivan (Law) and Dean Al Sullivan (Natural Resources) made a few remarks on various issues of importance to the faculty and the colleges. There was also emphasis on the need for the two groups to work together in the upcoming year.

The Deans and FCC then adjourned to separate meetings.

At the FCC meeting, Professor Evans noted that most of the proposed items of business concerned the next academic year, so she turned the chair over to Professor Morrison. Committee members discussed faculty salaries, an issue to which Dr. Bruininks had spoken during the lunch. Professor Morrison said it appeared that some of the colleges will add an additional 1% to the 3% that will be provided from central administration, but some colleges will add nothing or only a small amount. This is clearly an issue that will require continuing discussion.

Professor Gudeman reported that at the most recent Finance and Planning Committee meeting, in the budget presentation from Dr. Bruininks and Mr. Pfitzenreuter, the budget had been divided into two categories, "common goods" and "essential" items. The latter includes faculty salaries. Professor Gudeman said he had inquired why faculty salaries were not considered common goods, since they represented the University's most valuable asset. The Finance and Planning Committee will continue to press on this issue as well.

Professor Murthy inquired what would be done. Professor Morrison noted that the proposal the President has made about fund-raising (using private funding to supplement faculty salaries) was very commendable, but it could have no effect before 2002. There is need for an interim solution--or the University will continue to have problems. He said he was not optimistic anything positive will happen for 1999-2000, and said the Committee needed to push hard to move more funding into the "essential" category that Professor Gudeman identified, and that those funds be committed early in the academic year, so that commitments are not made later that eat up funds available for salaries.

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Professor Gudeman added that the Finance and Planning Committee will seek more fine-grained data on salaries, because there are not available good salary comparisons. He solicited suggestions on the ways in which it would be useful to have comparisons, and said he would like to have salary discussions focused on such data.

Professor Humphreys alluded again to the problem of the University being required to request all salary funds, whereas each year state agencies are automatically provided whatever the cost-of-living increase is determined to be.

Professors Bales and Grave reported on the academic appointments task force, which has thus far met twice. By the end of the second meeting, it seemed that task force members agreed on virtually nothing (although part of the problem may be that with some people missing meetings, there has been little time to make progress). The deans appeared to agree with none of the recommendations of the Academic Appointments Committee. The heaviest users of non-tenure-track faculty (NTT) are the professional schools, and the regularization of their appointments is not an urgent matter for those schools, largely because these NTT faculty are treated well and because it is not important that the faculty cannot be accurately counted. It may be VERY difficult to make reforms, Professor Bales concluded, because there is little incentive to do so among important players.

Professor Morrison said that if it appears to the faculty members of the task force that progress is not being made, FCC should hear about that and talk with the President about the situation. Professor Evans agreed, and said that FCC will need to make clear to the President and Dr. Bruininks that the task force must reach agreement, and take seriously the issues, or the Senate will have to take independent action to force the issue.

Another item that will be a major concern next year is health care coverage, and Professor Morrison suggested that Professor McGehee meet with the Committee very early in the academic year. There will be a need for firm recommendations, rather than merely expressing disappointment every two years and postponing any effective decision until two years later, when the process is repeated.

Professor Morrison then distributed gifts to outgoing members of the Committee, and thanked them for their service. He wished Professor Tirrell well as leaves for his new position in California beginning in the fall.

The Committee then reviewed its schedule for 1999-2000, the structure of Senate meetings, and the structure of the Business and Rules committee. The agenda for the Committee retreat at Crookston in August was also discussed. After these business matters were settled, Professor Morrison adjourned the meeting at 2:30.

-- Gary Engstrand