

Minutes*

Faculty Consultative Committee
Thursday, February 22, 2001
1:30 – 3:30
238A Morrill Hall

Present: Joseph Massey (chair pro tem), Wilbert Ahern, Linda Brady, Dan Feeney, Marti Hope Gonzales, David Hamilton, Paula Rabinowitz, Gwen Rudney, Charles Speaks

Regrets: Muriel Bebeau, Susan Brorson, Les Drewes, Richard Goldstein, Marvin Marshak, Fred Morrison, V. Rama Murthy, Billie Wahlstrom

Absent: none

Guests: none

Other: Nick Bussey (Minnesota DAILY)

[In these minutes: (1) committee business; (2) football stadium; (3) nominating committee for FCC and Committee on Committees; (4) taking up issues posed by faculty senators]

1. Announcements and Report of the Chair Pro Tem

Professor Massey convened the meeting and noted several items concerning the Senate meeting immediately following the meeting. He noted especially the large number of students who had shown up at the legislature and said the Committee appreciated the support of students at the Capitol. He also observed that the press coverage of the University has been very positive.

Professor Speaks inquired if the University is receiving press coverage outside the metropolitan area. The Twin Cities newspapers are the most widely read in the state but they do not necessarily speak to the issues in non-metropolitan areas.

Professor Massey also noted that he is setting up meetings with all FCC members, as chair-elect, to obtain their views on what the objectives of the Committee should be during 2001-02.

2. A Football Stadium

Professor Massey next reported on the football stadium discussions. Dave Mona (Shandwick International and WCCO-Radio) and Vice President Eric Kruse met with the Alumni Association Advocacy Comm on February 20. There is much planning going on, while the University is passive, and a bill will be introduced in the Legislature on or around March 1.

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The University SAYS it is being passive but it appears not to be, Professor Speaks asserted. He reported that he and Professor Charles Campbell were asked to serve on a focus group to talk about what makes a stadium a college stadium rather than a professional team stadium.

Professor Massey said that he was afraid that in a year when legislators will see the pot of funds limited, if money goes to a stadium it will not go to the University for academic needs. Nor will there be funds to pay for the operating costs of a stadium, Professor Rabinowitz observed.

Professor Rabinowitz also noted an editorial in the NEW YORK TIMES about the fact that the single biggest predictor of whether someone will get into college is whether they were an athlete. These are data that have accumulated over 50 years; the situation is getting worse and worse. That is not true at Minnesota, Professor Brady said; the admissions office does not give preference to athletes and is quite strong about this. The Faculty Academic Oversight Committee has met with Admissions and there is good communication with that office; it is clear that the new committees are dealing with these issues.

Professor Speaks asked if, in the judgment of the Committee, there is genuine consultation occurring about the stadium. (The general response of Committee members was "no.") Serving on a focus group is not consultation, he observed. He noted that Vice President Kruse has been to the Committee on Finance and Planning but the reports have only been informational.

When was the decision made to go forward on planning, Professor Brady asked? Professor Speaks explained that in the case of the Metrodome, the University did not participate in planning so ended up in a forced marriage in which it had no say about the stadium. So now it is not being so passive--the University claims it does not want a stadium but if it is to be saddled with one, it wants it designed in the University's best interests.

The Committee agreed that it would try to schedule both President Yudof and Vice President Kruse at the same time in the near future so that both would receive the same message. This goes back to autonomously functioning support units, Professor Feeney said; the President is focused on the budget, as he should be; both he and Mr. Kruse should be invited to join the Committee to hear its concerns about the diversion of funds to a stadium.

Professor Speaks said he would also like an explanation of what Mr. Kruse described as his "worst nightmare": the Metropolitan Sports Facilities Commission GIVING the Metrodome to the University, with its \$7 million annual operating costs. If a new stadium with a retractable roof were to cost \$500 million, it would take over 70 years of operating the Metrodome to match that cost. Ideally, should a stadium be on the campus? Of course. But there is nothing wrong with the Metrodome, he concluded.

And what happens to the campus if Vikings fans are at games, Professor Feeney asked? There will be more traffic, trash, and it would not be good for esprit d'corps. Nor would the impact on parking be positive, Professor Brady said, especially on Monday nights.

3. Nominating Committee

The Committee next reviewed a proposal to change the way in which Twin Cities members of the nominating committees for the Committee on Committees and the Faculty Consultative Committee are

chosen. Rather than rely on ad hoc committees appointed each year, it was agreed that there should be a standing nominating committee with three-year terms elected by the Twin Cities Campus (Faculty) Assembly. Twin Cities FCC members would nominate two individuals for each open slot; the Faculty Assembly would then elect the members.

On a related matter, it was agreed that a message should be sent to all individuals who receive the minutes of Senate committees asking them to identify colleagues (preferably those early in their career, just post-tenure or thereafter) who would bring useful perspective and wise counsel to the committees.

4. Issues Pending

The Committee next reviewed a number of issues that have arisen in recent months, including a compilation of issues that were raised when members of the Committee had a series of lunches with Faculty Senators earlier in the academic year.

1. Issues associated with Sponsored Projects Administration. Professor Hamilton will make a report to the Committee on SPA in the near future.
2. Staff support for faculty
3. Governance in the colleges and who has voting rights
4. Salaries in CLA, particularly the humanities; the Committee agreed to obtain salary data by discipline. A related matter, source of funds for fringe benefit costs for non-tenure-track faculty, will also be taken up with Executive Vice President Bruininks.
5. Time allocated for research
6. The need for an ombudsperson for faculty. Professor Hamilton suggested the Committee should talk to Ms. Chalmers, the Grievance Officer. It agreed to do so.
7. Financial conditions in the Medical School: the AHC Finance and Planning Committee will make a report to the Senate Committee on Finance and Planning.
8. The management of the hospital and its relationship to faculty morale in the AHC; the AHC FCC will be asked to consider this and FCC will take it up with Dr. Cerra on March 15.
9. A compilation of items including daycare, maternity leave, and the question of the uniform application of policies across departments, in particular the ones that affect the extent to which the University is female-friendly. It was agreed that the Committee would appoint an ad hoc group from FCC to examine the issues and make recommendations.
10. IMG and its impact on collaboration between faculty: this is being considered by the Committee on Educational Policy with respect to teaching. Committee members observed that the President could change the system if he wished.

11. The cost structure of Facilities Management vis-à-vis small projects and the restrictions on the ability of units to use outside contractors.
12. Exposure of PIs to harassment and their inability to keep data private: the Committee agreed to meet with Susan McKinney from the General Counsel's office and perhaps then refer the issue to the Senate Research Committee.
13. Parking and the wait that junior faculty face before they can get a contract (up to two years). "It is absurd to spend \$500,000 recruiting a faculty member and then not provide parking for the person."
14. The role and responsibilities of support service units with respect to the academic community.
15. The critical need to consider the instrumentalization of the University, a subject that will be taken up when the Committee considers the issues raised by "The Kept University."

Professor Massey then adjourned the meeting at 3:40.

-- Gary Engstrand

University of Minnesota