

Minutes*

Faculty Consultative Committee
Thursday, October 18, 2001
12:00 – 2:15
N202 Mondale Hall

Present: Joseph Massey (chair), Wilbert Ahern, Muriel Bebeau, Susan Brorson, Les Drewes, Arthur Erdman, Daniel Feeney, Richard Goldstein, Marti Hope Gonzales, Marc Jenkins, Candace Kruttschnitt, Leonard Kuhi, Marvin Marshak, Judith Martin, Scott McConnell, Jeff Ratliff-Crain, Charles Speaks

Absent: Paula Rabinowitz

Guests: Executive Vice President Robert Bruininks

Other: Florence Funk (Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost)

[In these minutes: (1) various items: faculty rep on Regents' outreach committee, meeting with chair and vice chair of the Regents, civic engagement, part-time students, AHC FCC issues, (lack of) faculty participation in capital planning, the future of Northrop Auditorium, standing subcommittee on capital plans, support for subcommittees, issues from lunch with department chairs/heads; (2) University Plan, Performance, and Accountability report (with Executive Vice President Bruininks); (3) revision in membership, Senate Research Committee]

1. Report of the Chair and Committee Business

-- Professor Massey convened the meeting at 12:10 and reported that at the invitation of Regent Bergland, FCC had nominated Professor Joseph Warthesen to serve as the faculty representative on the Board of Regents' Outreach Committee.

-- He then reported on the "3x3x3" meeting of the previous week. (The "3x3x3" meetings, which take place three or four times per year, include the (1) Board of Regents' chair, vice chair, and Executive Director, (2) the President, Executive Vice President and Provost, and President's Chief of Staff, and (3) the FCC chair, vice chair, and staff.) One of the principal topics of discussion at the meeting had been the role and participation of Senate committee chairs or FCC representatives who regularly attend Regents' committee meetings.

-- On the matter of civic engagement, brief discussion suggested that the President, FCC, and Professors Fogelman and Boyte are of considerably different views on what it means. Civic engagement needs clarification, Professor Massey concluded.

* These minutes reflect discussion and debate at a meeting of a committee of the University of Minnesota Senate or Twin Cities Campus Assembly; none of the comments, conclusions, or actions reported in these minutes represents the views of, nor are they binding on, the Senate or Assembly, the Administration, or the Board of Regents.

-- The President has said the University should reduce the number of part-time students who are not serious students. Professor Speaks reported that he had sent the outline of a proposal to the President and learned that Dean Rosenstone and Associate Dean Skaggs are developing a proposal.

-- Professor Massey welcomed Professor Jenkins to the meeting and asked him what issues his committee is dealing with. (Professor Jenkins, chair of the Academic Health Center Faculty Consultative Committee (AHC FCC), now serves as an ex officio member of this Committee.) Professor Jenkins said it is dealing with a number of the same issues that FCC is. Two major issues are the large number of non-tenured/tenure-track faculty and leadership implementation of the strategic plan for the Academic Health Center. Another issue of concern is the relationship between the University and Fairview-University Hospital and what that relationship means for the daily life of clinical faculty.

-- Professor Speaks next reported on faculty/student participation in capital project and planning decisions. The Capital Improvements Advisory Committee (about 22 people, including 1 faculty member--him) used to advise the administration on capital projects. Recently, however, it has met less frequently and made fewer recommendations to the President; now he has been informed that meetings have been suspended until further notice. In the meantime, a Capital Oversight Group (COG) has been involved in the process; it has no faculty members. Professor Speaks said he told the President he believed there should be faculty participation in the process so proposes to recommend to the Committee on Finance and Planning that it create a standing subcommittee on capital projects. The President has indicated he supports such a proposal.

How will creating a subcommittee lead to faculty participation in the capital planning process, Professor Kuhi asked? That needs to be worked out, Professor Speaks said; the subcommittee will report to Finance and Planning, which in turn will forward recommendations wherever it needs to--this Committee, to the President, and possibly the Capital Oversight Group. Professor Massey suggested the recommendations come through FCC; Professor Speaks agreed. What he needs to do now, Professor Speaks related, is look at the timetable of events that Associate Vice President Pfitzenreuter provided in order to determine when the subcommittee should do its work.

How will the subcommittee be appointed, Professor Bebeau asked? He will solicit nominations from this Committee, from the Finance and Planning committee, and will accept them from any other place as well. He welcomed Professor Erdman as a volunteer. Professor Kuhi observed that how projects get on the University's capital request list is clearly a sore issue.

-- Discussion turned to the plans for Northrop Auditorium, sparked by an article in the DAILY. Several points were made.

The Capital Improvements Advisory Committee never discussed any plans for Northrop. The Committee on Finance and Planning learned about the plans at a meeting in September; as a result, it has scheduled a discussion next Tuesday with Vice President Kruse and the chairs of the School of Music and the Department of Theater Arts.

Faculty members on this Committee and on Finance and Planning have suggested that Northrop is not appropriate for the size of the investment that will be required. In the words of one, just because it is there does not mean the University should spend money on it.

Two members of the Board of Regents made comments to the effect that the Twin Cities is a tough market to compete in for events that would be scheduled in an auditorium the size of Northrop.

There seems to be no statement of purpose and no long-term plan. (These may be in a document somewhere; none of the governance committees have seen it.)

Sometimes items are put on the capital list years before it is expected they will actually be funded; that is not a dynamic process and does not take into account the state of the economy, the legislature's views, etc. The committees are not necessarily informed of political and economic issues (nor do they need to be) but they do want to look at the alignment of capital projects with the University's academic priorities.

The Committee voted unanimously in favor of creation of the subcommittee on capital projects.

-- Support for subcommittees: Professor Massey reported on a discussion he had had with the Senate staff about support for subcommittees. FCC and other committees have been creating more and more subcommittees but there is not staff time to support them. It was agreed that subcommittees would be provided assistance in setting their first meeting; if they needed more support, they could make a case to this Committee.

-- Issues from lunches with department chairs/heads: Professor Massey suggested that Committee members review the list and come to the next meeting with suggestions on how they should be dealt with. Professor Kruttschnitt urged that the department chairs/heads also be informed about what will happen, so they know what plans are being made and that they did not waste their time. Professor Speaks cautioned that some of the issues raised may not be problems across the University.

2. The University Plan, Performance, and Accountability Report

Professor Massey now welcomed Executive Vice President Bruininks to the meeting to discuss the University Plan, Performance, and Accountability Report. Dr. Bruininks distributed two hand-outs and discussed them with the Committee.

Over the years, by Regents' policy, the University has developed a number of indicators to measure its performance. In addition, the University provides many other reports on various topics. The President concluded that the Regents were receiving a lot of reports on specific topics but were not getting the big picture. As a result the administration worked with the Regents for several months to bring all these reports into the Plan, Performance, and Accountability Report. Dr. Bruininks reviewed the expected contents of the report.

The initial report (December, 2001) will be refined over the next twelve months, presented to the Regents in 2001 and 2001, and thereafter on a biennial cycle just before the University makes its biennial request to the legislature.

The report will focus on six areas: academic excellence (faculty and academic programs), students (undergraduate, graduate, and professional), engagement (access and outreach), human resources, physical heritage and integrity, and institutional efficiency and effectiveness. The intent is to

articulate the University's visions/aspirations/goals, what it is about, and to align goals with the evaluation measures and how money is spent.

The report calls for specific sections dealing with the campuses at Crookston, Duluth, Morris, and Rochester. Professor Ratliff-Crain asked if there should not also be a section on the Twin Cities. Dr. Bruininks thought not, and said the Twin Cities would be dealt with in system issues; these special sections allow the coordinate campuses to identify their "unique signatures."

Committee members made a number of comments and suggestions.

-- On the list of indicators that would be used, for students there is nothing that indicates whether they are satisfied with the EDUCATION they received, Professor Martin pointed out. Dr. Bruininks said that question is in the survey done of students; this might be an issue to raise with the Committee on Educational Policy as well. Also on students, there should be a question of international students about their level of satisfaction.

-- Setting goals and measures is a good idea, but several of the indicators are many levels removed from direct control (e.g., number of National Academy members, number of patent applications), Professor Erdman noted; if these kinds of measures are not important to the faculty, using them could backfire. Dr. Bruininks agreed and said that what is to be measured needs discussion; if something is to be assessed, he said, it should be something that can be developed and managed. Not all of the measures are equally important; some are of more interest to the public and some are of more interest internally. The audience for the measures is VERY important, Professor Kruttschnitt emphasized.

Professor Marshak agreed that it is important to rank the measures in importance. The dilemma is who is the audience; the University must put out the best picture it can while also being honest with itself. The measures should be used to make a difference in improving the University, Dr. Bruininks agreed. It is to be hoped the measures are of value when finished; the discussion also helps identify where the University does not have measures for things that are important. He also said he believed it is important to get the information into the open and into public discussion.

-- In terms of strengthening the community, Professor Kruttschnitt suggested, University actions to strengthen the Twin Cities community could engender more support in the legislature.

-- Professor Bebeau inquired if any thought had been given to how to measure the extent to which the environment at the University promotes academic integrity. Dr. Bruininks said there had not been a lot of thought given to this area but agreed it could be important. This first version of the report will emphasize measures for which the University collects data.

-- In terms of teaching load, one gets a different answer depending on whether it is a measure of effectiveness and efficiency or of Academic Excellence, Professor Speaks pointed out. This led to a discussion of the interaction between enrollment and Incentives for Managed Growth (with no particular outcome).

The issue is not just the number of classes a faculty member must teach, it is also the number of students IN the classes, Professor Ahern said. Professor Kuhl later advocated getting away from the number of courses taught and instead look at faculty workload. The focus should be on instructional and

research effort, Professor Ahern said. Professor Speaks agreed that number of classes taught is not the right measure; supervising doctoral students and honors theses is also teaching.

-- There must be good ideas about where the University should go, Dr. Bruininks said; the issue is what the University's profile should be. For example, he would argue that an enrollment of about 5% from non-reciprocity states is too low; it would be good for the state and the campuses if that number were to increase.

-- In response to a series of questions from Professor Drewes, Dr. Bruininks said the report would probably be provided to the Board of Regents and then a version prepared for public distribution. The report would probably be about 150 pages, would be data-intensive, and might provide opportunities for critics of the University. The President does not just want good news in the report; the University should step up and say so if there is bad news--and what it is doing about it. The report might open the University to questions, but this is an open society and the University must be open about its problems. Bringing all this information together will also probably create new questions.

-- The President seems to have shifted his position over the summer, Professor Marshak commented. Last spring he was talking about the bleak future of public research universities, the lack of state support for them, and the need to think about a quasi-private institution. Now he is talking about specific problems that the University should solve but saying the University has momentum in the right directions. Dr. Bruininks said he did not believe the President had shifted; he was pointing out to the new Regents that there has been a decade of progress in many areas that describe the quality, progress, and impact of the University. Unlike earlier comments, his more recent comments were not intended to deal with the financial future of the University and the need to replace some public support with private funds.

-- The indicators in the report are intended to stimulate discussion, Dr. Bruininks said. Some are real measures and will be in the report; others are included to help the University think about its evaluation strategy. The Academy of Distinguished Teachers has issued two white papers that could help him think about the measures, Professor Martin observed.

It would also help to report on what happens to students when they leave the University, Professor Speaks said, and if they stay in the state and what they do. Dr. Bruininks agreed and said the University follows up with students, although the system does not work as well as it should.

Dr. Bruininks said the report should be treated as a work in progress, not given a pass or fail; there will be chances to improve it as things move along. The report must also stay at a high level and not attempt to include everything down to the department level. At the same time the report should not lose qualitative data, Professor Ratliff-Crain said.

Professor Massey thanked Dr. Bruininks for his report.

3. Senate Research Committee Membership

Professor McConnell reviewed with the Committee a proposal from the Senate Research Committee to expand the faculty membership of the Committee from 8 to 15 in order to ensure representation from the breadth of disciplines at the University. The bylaw change gives guidance to the Committee on Committees for selecting faculty members.

Professor Drewes noted that the Duluth campus has a number of departments in various disciplines; are representatives from Duluth envisioned? They are not because the faculty in the Duluth bargaining unit have declined to participate in the governance system. Professor Ahern noted that a bargaining unit faculty member from Duluth will serve on the nominating committee to identify candidates for the Morse-Alumni award; the bargaining unit has not objected to that arrangement.

While the bargaining unit has consistently declined to accept the invitation of the Faculty Consultative Committee to participate in the governance system, perhaps it is time to ask them again if they wish to participate, Professor Marshak suggested.

Professor McConnell also reported that he and Vice President Maziar met and that one topic of discussion was the University's policy governing secrecy in research (which provides that any exceptions to the policy must be approved by the Senate Research Committee). It seems that there have been changes proposed in light of the events of September 11, so the Committee will take them up at its November meeting and then bring proposals to this Committee.

Professor Massey adjourned the meeting at 2:15.

-- Gary Engstrand

University of Minnesota