

Minutes*

Faculty Consultative Committee
Friday, June 28, 2002
9:30 – 11:00
238A Morrill Hall

Present: Joseph Massey (chair), Muriel Bebeau, Susan Brorson, Tom Clayton, Arthur Erdman, Daniel Feeney, Marti Hope Gonzales, Marc Jenkins, Candace Kruttschnitt, Leonard Kuhl, Judith Martin, Paula Rabinowitz, Jeff Ratliff-Crain, Charles Speaks

Absent: Wilbert Ahern, Les Drewes, Richard Goldstein, Roberta Humphreys, Mary Jo Kane, Marvin Marshak, Mary McEvoy, Scott McConnell, Martin Sampson

Guests: Interim-President-Designate Robert Bruininks

Other: Dan Gilchrist (Office of the President)

[In these minutes: (1) discussion with Interim-President-Designate Bruininks; (2) the presidential search]

1. Discussion with Interim-President-Designate Bruininks

Professor Massey convened the meeting at 9:30. He welcomed and congratulated Dr. Bruininks on his appointment as Interim President.

Dr. Bruininks said he was overwhelmed by what had happened to him on the way to a sabbatical, all within a week. He expressed thanks for the support from the Faculty Consultative Committee for his appointment as Interim President. He said, however, that as one who has devoted his life to the University of Minnesota, he still believes that the best and most coveted job is that of professor.

Having support from his faculty colleagues meant a great deal to him, he told the Committee. He would not have taken the position without strong support from the faculty as well as the deans and chancellors because he could not succeed as Interim President without that support. He said he was also heartened by the external support for the UNIVERSITY at this time; there are very positive feelings about the transition and not a lot of anxiety.

Dr. Bruininks said that if he had a choice he would not have picked this year to take the job as Interim President; the University faces its most challenging position in a decade or more. It is, however, a united community, strong, with a lot of public trust. On the other side, however, there are a lot of political changes that will affect it (especially in the legislature) and the state budget is badly out of balance.

It is important, he said, for faculty to talk to candidates DURING the campaign so that positions do not get entrenched and so the candidates can be persuaded that there important public investments that

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need to be made. One of them is education--and not just the University, which must find common ground with those who believe that an investment in education matters to the future of the state. People often do not pay enough attention to legislative races; it is important that faculty attend to who is running and their views about the University. Urban legislators should care deeply about the University, if only in economic terms and as an employer--it is huge. Those legislators are usually helpful to the University but it is difficult to find one to carry the torch for the University as they might for a large business in a district.

Dr. Bruininks suggested that FCC identify a small group of two or three people to represent it as the University develops its legislative strategy. The strategy will include an emphasis on accountability (following through on the interest in the last legislative session). While providing reports on accountability can be onerous, the reports also have an instrumental value in that they help to tell the University's story to legislators.

Dr. Bruininks made several observations about the budget and related matters.

- The University must consider the impact of rising costs (i.e., tuition) on students and families. It has set aside money for low-income students (who are largely insulated from the tuition increases), but middle-income families (households with income starting at about \$40,000) are being squeezed.
- The University must increase the role of philanthropy in funding its activities, and especially in student support, and not use internal funds as much as it now does. The University is dead last in the Big Ten in merit scholarships, for example.
- The University must deal with issues of management. Academics gag on things like Total Quality Management or re-engineering or Zero-Based Budgeting, but there is need for a language to address management issues that does not turn everyone off. The idea is not only to save money but also to improve the quality of services. Often these efforts have fizzled in the past because no one liked the terms being used. Any improvements, however, cannot require a lot of transaction time in a place where people value their time; the University must be smart and focused on improving management--but it must also have credibility in this area or it will look like an institution that can only manage itself if it has more money.

Professor Martin asked Dr. Bruininks if he saw his position weakened by being interim. Dr. Bruininks said he did not see that at all; it is the quality of one's ideas and the way they are discussed that determine how successful one is. He said he does not intend to coast for the next year and that he has ideas he intends to pursue.

Professor Kuhi maintained that the "high tuition, high aid" model pursued by the private colleges (that is, set tuition high and then award students a lot of aid so they can choose where they want to go to college) results in more state student support money flowing into the private colleges. Dr. Bruininks said the model is hurting the public systems and is based on a free enterprise argument. The University must make the case that it is a public good.

Professor Erdman expressed dismay about the leaks that have been occurring with respect to searches, especially in the search for the athletic director. He said that Professor Kane, chair of the

athletic director search committee, and the search firm have done a good job. The Committee discussed how searches can be sabotaged or harmed by premature release of candidate names; Professor Speaks commented that leaks besmirch the reputation of one's colleagues as well as subvert the process. Dr. Bruininks said he valued athletics for men and women, but the program must be managed well and within budget. He said he was not intimidated by the athletic community and that the program must be run in accord with academic values. The University has a good group of coaches who understand this, he said, but the University cannot be whipsawed by athletics. He agreed that Professor Kane has done a superb job and deserves a pat on the back from her colleagues for her efforts.

Professor Erdman said he was encouraged by the high quality of the candidates for athletic director. Even if one does not support athletics, he observed, one should recognize the importance of getting someone good in the position to straighten out the situation.

Dr. Bruininks was asked about the position of Vice President for Research and Dean of the Graduate School: will it be kept as one position, now that Vice President Maziar has been named Executive Vice President and Provost? Dr. Bruininks said he has talked with Dr. Maziar about this. For the interim, until a new president is appointed, David Hamilton will be Interim Vice President for Research and Victor Bloomfield will be Interim Dean of the Graduate School (and will continue as Vice Provost for Research and Interdisciplinary Studies); the University will not miss a beat in the transition, he said. Dr. Bruininks told the Committee that he felt the University could not wait while searches were conducted--there needed to be a team in place.

He and President Yudof felt strongly that Dr. Maziar's appointment as Executive Vice President and Provost should NOT be interim; it is the nerve center of the University. A new president might want someone else in the position; it has been agreed that she would serve for 90 days after the new president is appointed; the appointment could be continued without a search. And after 90 days, Professor Kruttschnitt asked? The appointment would be as usual, Dr. Bruininks said--the central officers serve at the pleasure of the President, have an annual appointment, and are not entitled to notice if terminated.

Will the position remain as one or be separated into two, Professor Speaks asked? His feeling is that the new president should decide, Dr. Bruininks replied. The two interim appointments will remain in place until the president is appointed. The new president may want to reorganize the structure, shift responsibilities, and so on. He will not have time to do so during his interim term, Dr. Bruininks said; these are subjects worth serious conversation, but not this year.

Dr. Bruininks said he believed the University was in good condition and that it should have a good year, although not an easy year. Professor Massey said he would have the Committee's support, to which several Committee members added a "hear, hear." Professor Speaks asked that the Committee's thanks be extended to Susan Hagstrom, Dr. Bruininks's wife.

Dr. Bruininks commented that he and his wife will not live at Eastcliff, a decision the Yudofs think is wise, but they will use it for entertaining and meetings.

He said he was very comfortable with advice, criticism, and ideas; he does not believe he has all the ideas and many come from conversations such as this one.

Professor Martin asked if Dr. Bruininks, as a long-term member of the University community, would meet with the Twin Cities legislative delegation. Many of the legislators, she said, simply do not know much about the University; the lack of leadership reflects the lack of knowledge rather than ill-will, she said. Dr. Bruininks said he did intend to meet with the legislative delegation; he has worked with the legislature a lot, on both sides of the aisle. He said he will talk about the importance of the University to the life of the community and the contributions it makes. The "high tuition, high aid model," with dollars following students, does not support the public-good contributions of the University. The idea that the University will not do anything unless someone pays for it is a complete change, one that turns its back on 150 years of University history and on the institution's contributions to the public good.

Professor Massey thanked Dr. Bruininks for meeting with the Committee.

2. Presidential Search

The Committee next turned its attention to a draft letter from Professors Massey, Feeney, and Martin to Regents' Chair Maureen Reed concerning the conduct of the presidential search and the composition of the search-advisory committee. After a few editorial suggestions, the Committee agreed that Professors Massey, Feeney, and Martin should finish the letter and send it.

The Committee also identified the names of individuals it wished to ask to serve on the presidential search-advisory committee. It agreed that it would want a meeting with the individual selected to serve.

Professor Massey, noting that this was his last meeting as chair, adjourned the meeting at 11:15. The Committee gave him a round of applause.

-- Gary Engstrand

University of Minnesota