

Minutes*

Faculty Consultative Committee
Thursday, March 28, 2002
12:00 – 2:00
471 Mondale Hall

- Present: Joseph Massey (chair), Wilbert Ahern, Muriel Bebeau, Susan Brorson, Arthur Erdman, Daniel Feeney, Marti Hope Gonzales, Candace Kruttschnitt, Leonard Kuhi, Judith Martin, Paula Rabinowitz, Jeff Ratliff-Crain, Charles Speaks
- Absent: Les Drewes, Richard Goldstein, Marc Jenkins, Scott McConnell
- Guests: Executive Vice President and Provost Robert Bruininks; Professors John Nichols, Susan Youtz (Pennsylvania State University)
- Other: Florence Funk (Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost)

[In these minutes: (1) committee business/personnel issues; (2) health care; (3) calendars; (4) discussion of a variety of topics with Executive Vice President Bruininks]

1. Committee Business

Professor Massey convened the meeting at 12:15 and welcomed Professors John Nichols and Susan Youtz, the faculty senate president and senate executive secretary from Penn State University, visiting the University of Minnesota to discuss and compare governance functions.

The Committee then identified the names of two individuals to be contacted about being candidates for the Nominating Committee.

Professor Massey next reported, in the interest of disclosure, that he will be a candidate for Dean of the College of Natural Resources.

The Committee discussed faculty appointments at the Crookston campus.

2. Health Care

Professor Rabinowitz asked about problems with the Definity health plan; it has not paid any doctors yet, she said. She has complained to Human Resources and spoken with Professor Morrison, chair of the Benefits Advisory Committee, and nothing has happened. What should the Committee do, she asked? The University spent a lot of time and money researching health care provision, but this provider seems not to be doing the job. Professor Erdman related that he has also encountered problems that required spending hours on the telephone.

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There needs to be a review of the quality of the providers, Professor Rabinowitz suggested, and the University should not wait a year to decide to eliminate one of them. This Committee should follow up on the issue, she maintained.

It was agreed that Professors Morrison and Green, who have been most heavily involved in health care, should be invited to visit the Committee.

3. Calendars

Professor Ahern reported that the Senate Committee on Educational Policy had approved the 2004-05 and 2005-06 calendars for Crookston and Morris but not for the Twin Cities. In the case of the latter, the Fall Semester would have only 71 instructional days AND finals would end on December 23; the Spring Semesters would have 74 instructional days. At the least, this creates an imbalance for courses that are offered both semesters, and it is a problem to try to keep people on the campus so late in December.

Professor Rabinowitz expressed the view that 15-week semesters are too long and boring and could be shortened. Some Committee members agreed; others did not. Professor Kuhl suggested lightheartedly that someone should get rid of the State Fair.

Professor Ahern said that the decision has implications for the entire University, because the other campuses do try to keep their calendars synchronous with the Twin Cities, at least to some extent. The Assembly Committee on Educational Policy is drafting a statement asking the administration to look into a different calendar for the Twin Cities campus. It is, he reflected, unacceptable that the State Fair drives educational policy at a research university.

It was agreed that ACEP should find out what the patterns at peer campuses are.

4. Discussion with Executive Vice President Bruininks

Professor Massey welcomed Dr. Bruininks to the meeting. The ensuing discussion touched upon a number of issues.

- The structure of faculty salary increases for 2002-03.
- Budget issues, including amount of salary increases, tuition increases, sources of salary increase funds, and size of the compact pool.
- Development of recurring support for the academic infrastructure (the libraries, merit-based student financial aid, classroom improvements and remodeling, research space improvement, and recruitment of faculty of color); quality of life items always seem to be at the end of the budgetary line and are frequently not seen as very "glitzy" issues. Professor Martin urged that Dr. Bruininks set out something in writing so that his successor would be aware of the issues.

Professor Erdman noted that University has seen more construction in the last five years than it has for a long time; has anyone looked at the amount of classroom, research, and office space compared to the peer institutions, now that there has been so much space added or remodeled? Is

the University still catching up or has the pendulum swung in the other direction? With all this new space, there is still very little money for maintenance.

One difference between the University and MNSCU is that the University has some of the oldest buildings in the state, Dr. Bruininks said, and is trying to do advanced research in old buildings. There are comparative data for institutions but he expressed doubt they were very reliable. He agreed that the University has had a lot of capital projects and that there should be relief on the pressure for space. It may be necessary to raise private and other money for maintenance.

- Faculty appointments at the Crookston campus. It was agreed that the Committee should have a discussion with Chancellor Sargeant.
- The status of football stadium proposals.
- Long-term funding for the libraries.

Professor Massey adjourned the meeting at 2:05.

-- Gary Engstrand

University of Minnesota