

SENATE RESEARCH COMMITTEE*
February 25, 1994
Minutes of the Meeting

PRESENT: Al Yonas (chair), John Basgen, Stephen Rich, Dan Feeney, Jeylan Mortimer, Alan Goldman, Paul Sackett, Eric Klinger, Sara Evans, Anne Petersen, WinAnn Schumi (for Tony Potami)

ABSENT: Signe Betsinger, Liz Eull, Dongli Su, Khoi Nguyen, Kirk Walztoni

REGRETS: John Basgen, N. L. Gault

OTHERS: Fay Thompson, Mark Brenner

GUESTS: Dick Bianco (Animal Care Committee), Darwin Hendel (Academic Affairs)

The minutes of the last meeting were approved.

Chairman Yonas convened the meeting at 12:30.

The first item of business was a report from Dick Bianco, Chair of the Animal Care Committee. Professor Bianco came before the Committee to discuss a data practices request from the Animal Rights Coalition. The Animal Rights Coalition made its first request in July, 1993 and since that time representatives of the Coalition have reviewed a significant amount of information relative to research involving animals. The University Attorney's Office has been the responsible party responding to such requests. The Attorney's Office has informed them that any research proposal involving the use of animals is private data until it is funded with federal or state monies, at which time the grant is then public data.

It should be noted that the Animal Care Committee is not an open meeting under Minnesota Law. Therefore, any materials the Coalition requested with regard to the work of that committee are private data and would not be available to the Coalition. There appears to be a form of harassment occurring due to these circumstances. It was pointed out that threats and intimidation are always done anonymously.

We are going to become a national target, commented Professor Bianco. We now have interstate attorneys involved.

Should the University give up this information without a struggle, asked one person? All facilities on all campuses, room numbers, locations, people, are listed on the information that could be released. One member commented that the University Attorney's Office has an obligation to people who work here to protect their safety.

What is there to preclude all the civil service and faculty who have been considered hurt from the threats of the animal rights people from suing the University for lack of protection, queried one member.

*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 represent the views of, nor are they binding on, the Senate or Assembly, the Administration, or the Board of Regents.

Without hesitation, the Committee unanimously agreed that a resolution ought to be prepared stating the foremost the personal health and safety of the people involved with animal care should come before anything else. Professor Yonas and Vickie Courtney will draft a resolution and forward it to Committee members prior to forwarding it on to the FCC and the Senate. The resolution will be forwarded to the University Attorney's Office as well.

Professor Bianco asked the Committee to hear him on one additional issue - staff support to the Animal Care Committee. The Committee has one secretary and no administrative help. The Committee is responsible for all campuses.

Who needs to make this decision, asked one member? Professor Yonas suggested that Professor Bianco talk to Professor Brenner regarding this issue.

PRINCIPLES TO GUIDE THE DEVELOPMENT OF INDICATORS FOR USE IN EVALUATING SUCCESS IN ACHIEVING STRATEGIC DIRECTION GOALS OUTLINED IN UNIVERSITY 2000

Darwin Hendel, Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs, brought before the Committee for its input and reaction to the set of principles to guide the development of indicators that would be used within the context of the strategic planning process that is outlined in University 2000.

He said that he sees this as a two-step process. 1) to obtain general consensus about the set of principles; and 2) to use these principles in looking at the proposed indicators and to decide based on those principles decide which indicators would make useful University-wide indicators. The general context and timetable for doing this, he said, is the Resolution of the Board of Regents that was approved in January. The Resolution stated that the University approves the development by the University central and unit administrators and in consultation with University and unit governance organizations, of critical measures and benchmarks for measuring institutional, campus, and unit performance, in realizing the goals of University 2000.

He went on to say that it seemed in looking at the various lists that had previously been proposed by administrative, collegiate units, and various committees, such as the Graduate School's Committee on Research and Graduate Education, that there really was no framework for looking at a proposed indicator and deciding whether or not it might be something that would be appropriately used at the University level. The feedback from Deans, and other groups, relative to some of the indicators that had been initially floating around, suggested that there was a need to have a sense of what the indicators should do and how they might be used.

The document distributed, he said, is a summary of many of the comments that people have made. The document is in draft form.

One member said that it sounded wonderful, but without numbers was unable to comment. Yet another member said that it really turned him off. The second paragraph on the first page is not right, he continued....that Historically, quality in American higher education has been measured more by the amount of its resources and the quality of its inputs, and less by the quality of its processes and demonstrable outcomes....The other problem he said, is that the University 2000 concept is so nebulous that it seems that you want a set of rules that would govern the judgment of any set of proposals that emerge, that fit everything in a universal way...this is impractical.

Will the stimulation of innovation be measured, asked one member? Professor Hendel responded that he thought it could be but how to find a procedure to do that is another issue. The intent is not that what would be developed would necessarily be only quantitative indicators, he said. There are other things that are much more qualitative and should be part of the overall system. It is not clear at this time how that might be captured.

Another member referred to item 7 on page six: Specifies Performance Levels - Performance levels (i.e., benchmarks) should be specified for each indicator, with an associated timeline that begins with indicator data for the first baseline year.....what about the things that are more quantifiable, such as graduation rates, amounts of dollars occurred from external sources, the number of publications, etc. It would be difficult to access what the price tag would be for achievement in certain levels. There is a certain congruity between what this documents says and what we are about, she said.

Professor Hendel commented that the issue of graduation rate indicators has been brought up several times.

Arguing about graduation rates is compelling, added another member. You can't talk about that without saying what we are aiming for, how big is the problem now, and how are we going to get there. There are many things that do not fit that model, she continued. I could see us being driven towards aiming at the changes that could be measured that way and away from things that cannot be measured that way.

For example, we could target at improving graduation rates and graduate a much higher percentage of students but find that the quality of the students who graduate are considerably lower than before.

Vice President Petersen said that she would provide Professor Hendel with the feedback received by the Committee on Research and Graduate Education relative to quality indicators. Professor Hendel indicated that would be very helpful.

Professor Hendel said he would be bringing back a revised document for the Committee's review. Concluding, he said that it is important as we look at the proposed set of indicators to see them as University level indicators and not to assume necessarily those are the indicators that particular collegiate units or departments would necessarily use in their planning process. At the collegiate and departmental level some of the University-wide indicators do not necessarily have the meaning that they do in other units. It will be important that the various units use the indicators that make sense to them.

Professor Yonas thanked Professor Hendel for his presentation.

CAMPUS CLIMATE FOR RESEARCH

Professor Yonas explained that the issue of research climate came before the Research Committee last year. The issue came to the Committee in the form of an assertion that there are academic programs within the University - and at various campuses of the University - in which research is not highly valued and in which support for research activities is lacking. In December of 1993, the Committee wrote to Vice President Anne Petersen encouraging the development of mechanisms for thorough periodic review of all academic programs on all campuses. The Committee invited Vice President Petersen to engage in a discussion relative to this issue. Professor Yonas turned the meeting over to Professor Klinger for an overview and to VP Petersen for further comment.

Professor Klinger said that this issue goes back two or three years that he has been concerned by the unevenness in the quality of the research climate in the sense that there were departmental units and sometimes collegiate level units around the University that had climates that were not conducive to research being done. He brought the issue to the Committee from the standpoint that there ought to be a systematic periodic evaluation of research climate in units and performed in such a way that people are not afraid to speak out.

Vice President Petersen began by saying that she thought this issue was important. If the uniqueness of the University of Minnesota is that we are a research and land-grant university and that our faculty are engaged in discovery - we need to worry about whether that is alive in some cases, she said. Campus missions need to be taken into account. There is a possible contradiction, the most different from that is Crookston. She said she did not know the extent to which Crookston faculty are engaged in discovery. Now that they are moving to a four year college, this may change, interjected one member.

There appears to be a workload issue, she said, and it may need to be examined relative to campus missions for the appropriate level. For example, within the Twin Cities Campus there is a lot of diversity in the percent of time allocated for research for different faculties. It may be that the diversity on the Twin Cities Campus is so broad that it may accommodate any cross-campus diversity - it would not extent beyond those percentages, she said. Continuing, she said that she believes that there is a set of issues. Workload is one of them, the infrastructure provided in another, and the attitude of the campus is yet another. Citing the Duluth Campus as an example, she said there is a difference of opinion among faculty about the extent to which research is an important part of the mission.

Professor Klinger responded that he agreed with what she was saying but on the other hand, even though the emphasis on research varies from campus to campus and from unit to units within those campuses that one of the defining characteristics of any portion of the University of Minnesota is that it shared in the research mission. He noted that he was speaking of baccalaureate level units or units with advanced degrees. If it is true that all of them share to some degree in the research mission, then there is still a question as to the extent to which faculty are able to engage in research and also whether the University conceives some kind of a lower limit to the place of research in each of those units, he said.

The Senate passed a workload policy - this policy mandated that departments and colleges formulate specific workload policies of their own. The purpose of specifying the place of research in those workloads more closely is to protect against the extinction or trivialization of research under competing pressures in some vulnerable University units, he said. The issue is somehow specifying lower limits.

Vice President Petersen interjected that she would be surprised, in looking at the data, that 30% is the lower limit.

Professor Klinger commented on faculty who do not have tenure. In some instances research productivity is made extraordinarily difficult - it requires virtually a monastic existence to produce research in some units and yet their future with the University depends on it. This is demoralizing and grossly unfair, he added.

Professor Klinger then read from a document (working draft) entitled Faculty Workload Effort Principles....The three quarters of an academic year are almost exclusively spent on the preparation and presentation of courses (5-8 per year), these courses typically require 9-15 direct instructional hours per week....Many faculty members find it difficult to devote time during the academic year to their own

scholarly pursuits or creative activity...summers and vacation periods are most apt to be devoted to such work, even though faculty are officially on nine-month contracts. The three quarters of the academic year are almost exclusively spent on instructional activities, campus committee work, administrative assignments, etc. The most disciplined faculty members may manage 5-10 hours a week, at most, on their own research, usually on weekends or late at night....Continuing, he read more on the kind of research that faculty are expected to do....The important thing is that such teacher scholars are in dialog with their counterparts in other centers of learning, staying current in their field and alive intellectually. What is essential, is an engagement of one's field and enjoyment of its intellectual challenges....the products are in many ways secondary and come as result of the natural development of one's thinking rather than for the sake of building one's professional resume....He also read from a document not yet passed by the subunit under discussion but was passed by the elected committee for that subunit described as the subunit policy regarding faculty workload. The main statement of this document says that it is essential that in a research college, time for research and scholarly writing as part of faculty members normal everyday activity during the academic year be protected from undue encroachment by other responsibilities....within in average subunit workload, and assuming the teaching commitments described above, research during the academic year should constitute a substantial portion, on average 1/3, of total university related activity.

Here you have two contrasting views, he said. Which one sounds more like the University of Minnesota? The exact percentage is less important than the principle that there needs to be a lower limit, Professor Klinger continued, that would prevent a workload policy for substantial portion of the University, from stating that during academic year, you teach almost exclusively. That you, in effect, do not get paid for research. If you want to do research, you do it on your own time.

One member inquired about the tenure standards on the various campuses - is tenure based on research contribution? Professor Klinger said that it is at Morris.

Has there been a change in the climate at Morris towards research over a long period of time, asked one member? Absolutely, responded Professor Klinger. He then provided a brief historical overview, starting in 1970. It remained quite ambiguous until last year until the mandate to produce a workload policy, formally and in writing.

It might make sense to hire more faculty so that the teaching load could be suitably reduced so that faculty could be players, commented one member. Does Morris make money so that it could do this?

Another person stated that this could be turned around....should we have people who are spending all their time on research and not on teaching and service, still be eligible for tenure? It might be helpful to see the tenure regulations.

The group turned to Professor Brenner for input. Professor Brenner said that there really is an expectation of both teaching and research accomplishment. Members spent some time discussing academic rewards - proportionality of effort that people engage in and the recognition of it. Professor Brenner commented that he thought the discussions, relative to the issue outlined above, should be focused on tenure track people. Professor Klinger concurred.

Professor Yonas summarized the issue brought forward by Professor Klinger. There has been a shift over history at one campus, away from the research enterprise towards teaching and increasing hours in the classroom, and a devaluing of the decisions that are made on that campus such that people who want to

devote their lives or contribute to research, are finding it harder and harder to manage. If so, these people were hired with another set of expectations, they were given tenure with another set of expectations....if this has been changed on them, then the contract has been broken.

Professor Klinger stated that there is still good research being done at Morris and there are still people dedicated to doing it. The administrative expectation of little research is beginning to close in on the faculty at Morris.

Another member countered the broken contract idea....saying that he was having a hard time with the notion that says anybody can go into an organization and say that the terms and conditions under which I enter hold until the day I retire....an organization cannot change, I have a right to demand that things remain as they are....Continuing, he said, we have to acknowledge the possibility of organizations shifting and the demands placed on the people in an organization changing.

There should be incorporated into the University's vision of itself, some vision of what Morris should be as an undergraduate institution that has national visibility because of the quality of it, yet another member commented. The first not only sounds like it not only is changing the terms under which people were hired but changing the vision and mission, yet another member commented.

The Committee then discussed how to proceed. This is a research issue, shouldn't the Vice President for Research and Graduate School's Office conduct the oversight? Are there other policies being put forth regarding the research role of the faculty within a unit? Vice President Petersen said that the Committee could have a resolution about the assumption that the hallmark of the faculty at the University of Minnesota is that they are engaged in discovery, whether it is research scholarship or creative activities, and therefore, the campus policies need to be supportive of that role. She noted that the President has talked about the primary mission of each of the campuses.

If there is a divergence between tenure expectations and what this document says then I think this calls for an administrative investigation, interjected one member.

Professor Klinger and Professor Yonas will work together on a resolution. It will be presented to the Committee at its next meeting.

INTERIM GUIDELINES REGARDING DIRECT AND INDIRECT CHARGES TO GRANTS

Professor Brenner lead the discussion regarding the revised federal guidelines regarding direct and indirect charges to grants. The federal government (Office of Management and Budget) has specific guidelines by which institutions must comply with how we collect indirect costs. Indirect costs are the real part of the expense of doing research. They are the parts that really support the infrastructure as opposed to the specific expenses of the grant in place. Because of problems (i.e., Stanford), the federal government has been forced to take a hard look at the use of indirect costs. As a consequence, major revisions have been passed by the federal government that we have to have in place starting July 1, 1994. This will be a phase-in year. Meaning, that any grant that comes up for renewal has to be in compliance; any grant that has an anniversary date on a budget has to be compliant on the date of the anniversary.

What are some of the major changes? Major changes "on an average grant" include the following:

Personnel: clerical people and administrators can no longer be direct charged. Professor Brenner said that this has been a common practice at this institution.

Supplies that will be disallowed: telephones, journals, office supplies (such as toner cartridges for computers, software, spreadsheets, etc.)

All of these things are needed to do research - is the University going to give the departments more money in their supply budgets, asked one member?

In time, but not this year, Professor Brenner said, we will be able to restore some of this money from indirect costs that we collect. It is guessed that this will be a 6-7 million dollar problem this year. We will be able to recover roughly 60X of these real expenses from the federal government because research supported by the federal government is about 60% of what goes on, the rest is supported by state, gifts, foundation accounts, and by cost sharing within the University.

This is a very major problem and it is not going to go away, Professor Brenner said. We do not want to see a loss of personnel. If we begin to back-off, then in fact, everything else begins to slide - we get less indirect costs the following year. We must maintain at this level. We hope people will re-budget, he continued. The purpose of the guidelines is to inform people how to prepare their budgets for the coming year. The document does not address how the dollars will be distributed. A document addressing this issue is forthcoming, he said. The framing issues in that document will address the dollars generated and the kinds of dollars available within units, and, the issue of the staffing and the appropriateness if the dollars should be restored.

One member said that there needs to be incentives for the people writing the grants to budget appropriately. Professor Brenner responded to this statement saying that he liked the idea of incentives but they have to be uneven. For example, Public Health - is unique in the institution because it has 85% on soft money.

There is on-going discussions regarding the creation of a special fund to negotiate with units on a case by case basis. Professor Brenner informed the Committee that the University will also be changing the way it has been using ICR dollars. The bottom line, he said, is a strong correlation with the support of activities of where ICR dollars came from. The consequence of that is that the Block Grants will disappear as ICR. Professor Brenner will discuss ICR dollars at a future meeting.

One member urged that this document be made available as soon as possible. Professor Brenner said it is on the electronic bulletin board at ORTTA.

Meeting Adjourned!

- Vickie Courtney

University of Minnesota