

Minutes*

**Senate Research Committee
Monday, September 27, 2004
1:15 - 3:00
238A Morrill Hall**

Present: Gary Balas (chair), Dianne Bartels, Victor Bloomfield, James Cotter, Christopher Cramer, Dan Dahlberg, Steven Gantt, Michael Hughey, Paul Johnson, James Luby, James Orf, Virginia Seybold, Thomas Schumacher, Maria Sera, Charles Spetland

Absent: Aleksa Babic, Sharon Danes, Robin Dittman, Kathy Ensrud, David Hamilton, Ryan Lukas, Mark Paller, George Trachte, Barbara VanDrasek, Michael Volna, Jean Witson

Guests: Senior Vice President and Provost E. Thomas Sullivan; Win Ann Schumi, Ed Wink (Office of the Vice President for Research); Mark Bohnhorst (Office of the General Counsel)

Other: none

[In these minutes: (1) Vice President for Research search; (2) research secrecy exceptions; (3) additional ex officio member; (4) Assistant Vice President for SPA search; (5) task force report on financing graduate education; (6) discussion with Provost Sullivan about the position of Dean of the Graduate School and Vice Provost and of Vice Provost for Faculty and Academic Affairs]

1. Discussion of the Vice President for Research Search

Professor Balas convened the meeting at 1:15 and reported that he had asked the ex officio members of the Committee to come at 1:30 in order that the voting members of the Committee could discuss the draft letter to the President concerning the candidates for Vice President for Research. The Committee voted unanimously to close the meeting for the discussion.

2. Research Secrecy Exceptions

Professor Balas opened the meeting and reported on a discussion he had had with the Faculty Consultative Committee about the research secrecy exceptions that had been granted. He said there was an outcry over the process used to allow the exceptions; it was said there should have been more consultation and the process went too quickly. He said he explained that one was rushed because of a deadline by the Department of Homeland Security and that this case also involved a PI stepping aside for health reasons. The policy provides that the department head chooses the new PI; the department head picked a postdoc non-resident from the Middle East to head the project. The second case involved geology research. He said he would forward to the Committee a letter from Mr. Bohnhorst, in the General Counsel's office, about the second case involving a geology survey. In that case FCC was concerned about what appeared to have been early negotiations between the faculty member or

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department and the agency, before any contract was signed, and then the University was pressured to sign the contract.

Mr. Bohnhorst commented that the geology case involved an already existing exception under the Research Secrecy Policy (a section 4 exception). The issues in the two cases were different. The one involving geological field work needed to be approved quickly because if the field work were to be done, it had to take place before the onset of winter. However, obtaining approval of this agreement did not involve expediting the review process set out for Section 2 case-by-case exceptions. There will be full disclosure to land owners, Professor Balas said. Mr. Bohnhorst agreed; he said the President insisted on it. Land owners will have full access to all the information; most mineral rights are owned by the State (a few are owned by the University or large companies), so if a company wants mineral rights, it will be negotiating with the State or other sophisticated entities. Professor Balas said he would present the additional information to the Faculty Consultative Committee.

3. Additional Ex Officio Member

Professor Balas reported that it has been proposed to add the Assistant Vice President for Regulatory Affairs as an ex officio member of the Committee. Ms. Schumi explained that the person (currently Mr. Bianco) will bring an expertise on use of animals, use of human subjects, conflict of interest, and so on. All researchers must deal with regulatory affairs but those concerns are not represented on the Committee.

Professor Dahlberg asked about the numbers on the Committee. Professor Balas noted that there are at present 8 ex officio members and 21 voting members. The question, Professor Dahlberg said, is whether the Committee will be so large that it cannot have discussions. Professor Balas recalled that the Committee discussed this last year and increased the number of faculty in order to have broader representation of research areas. Ms. Schumi commented that she has worked with the Committee for a long period and there were times when the ex officio members outnumbered the regular members; that is no longer true.

4. Search for the Assistant Vice President for Sponsored Projects Administration

Ms. Schumi reported that a new person will be hired to be Assistant Vice President; Mr. Wink, who has held that responsibility, will be moving to Johnston Hall and assuming a new set of responsibilities related to effort certification and negotiation of the University's indirect cost rate. The person will report to the Vice President for Research. They are using a search firm that has good references and with which they have had good experience in the past. The search committee is being chaired by Richard Portnoy in Epidemiology, and met with the search firm in August. The firm will bring names to the search committee, which will interview candidates and bring a final slate to the Vice President for Research. They hope to have someone in place by January, although that goal may slip a little, given the vagaries of calendars.

What is the basic job description, Professor Orf asked? Ms. Schumi itemized the job responsibilities: grant and contract administration of sponsored projects (proposal review, approval and submission; award review; negotiation and acceptance of all awards; active project management and close out) involving U.S. and foreign sponsors; establishment of Sub Agreements related to sponsored programs; negotiation of Material Transfer Agreements and of IP clauses in all grants and contracts; collaboration with faculty and with the office of Intellectual Property Commercialization and Business

Development on the recognition, protection, and commercialization of intellectual property; service and communications functions including assistance to the faculty and staff in departments, divisions, centers, and institutes in proposal submission, liaison with sponsoring agencies, and interpretation of complex internal and external regulations and policies in order to make appropriate decisions and to maintain institutional research compliance; maintenance of access to funding opportunity resources and instruction for faculty and staff in their use; and coordination with or participation in the Federal Demonstration Partnership, the Council on Governmental Relations, and other organizations including the Big 10 Research Administration Group.

Professor Balas noted that the faculty on the search committee (whose names were listed at the meeting) are heavily biomedical. There are different agencies that are involved in research, he said, and a broader mix of faculty would have brought a different range of experiences. Ms. Schumi asked if he wished to have people added to the search committee; he said he did not, but that in the future a broader spectrum of experiences would be helpful, not just individuals who work with NIH or NSF. The Patents and Technology Marketing position is on hold; when the search takes place, a broader spectrum of faculty should be involved. Ms. Schumi said they had intended to use the same committee, but it could be expanded.

Professor Orf asked about the minimum qualifications for the position. Ms. Schumi described them: An undergraduate degree in a relevant field; an advanced degree is preferred; a minimum of 5 years of experience of grants management or research administration responsibility is required, preferably in a decentralized university environment; a track record of successfully managing a large professional staff against clear performance objectives, including client service, in a rapidly changing environment; the ability to develop and sustain a balance between a high level of client service to faculty and staff and a culture of informed, self-directed compliance with institutional and sponsor regulations; proven skills in working effectively with faculty and staff, and with external constituents / partners; a career history showing success managing successively larger areas of responsibility and/or teams of professional staff; thorough knowledge of Federal and other sponsor regulations governing grant and contract administration, including OMB Circulars and Federal Acquisition Regulations, of cost accounting standards, and of developments in intellectual property protection and commercialization; exceptional negotiation skills; a collegial, problem-solving style based on personal integrity, professional confidence, and excellent relationship management skills; a participatory management style that models the values of client service, initiative, and collaboration; excellent interpersonal, management, communication, and organizational skills; a strong understanding of computer applications; prior experience in business-process redesign is preferred; an understanding of and appreciation for the research enterprise in an educational institution as it relates to teaching and scholarship and the ability to convey this appreciation to faculty, administrators, industry leaders, governmental officials, and the media; and a strong advocate for ethics and compliance both in the workplace and in all aspects of research administration.

Professor Balas thanked Ms. Schumi for her report.

5. Task Force Report on Financing Graduate Education

Professor Balas turned now to the report of the task force on financing graduate education, issued September 13. He noted that when the Provost joined the Faculty Consultative Committee, one FCC member expressed dismay that the report had not addressed critical issues in the biological sciences. The Provost asked for additional views and may re-assemble the task force to address issues that were not

emphasized. The report is in this Committee's area of interest, Professor Balas said, and if Committee members have comments on it they should send them to the Provost. He believes this is a very important issue, he wants answers, and wants the new Dean of the Graduate School to help solve the problems. Professor Balas asked Dean Bloomfield, a member of the task force, for insights about the report.

Dean Bloomfield noted that this was the PROVOST'S task force; at about the same time it was appointed, the Twin Cities Deans had established a working group on graduate education; he was a member of both and suggested they be merged. As a result, Dean Marilyn Speedie (Pharmacy) was added to the Provost's task force. Faculty members included Jean Bauer (FCC, Human Ecology) and Fred Morrison (FCC, Law) as well as others recently in the faculty role (himself, George Green). There were also several deans and some data people.

Professor Balas said he saw little in the report about the issue of the cost of a graduate student versus a postdoc or staff person. That is a big issue in his college and the biomedical sciences but it was not addressed in the report. Dean Bloomfield said it was discussed at great length and there are a couple of pieces to the issue. First, is the University more expensive than its peers with respect to the cost of a graduate student? It appears it is not. George Green spent a lot of time talking to the CIC schools, and except for Wisconsin and Illinois, the University's costs are not out of line. Professor Sera pointed out that the University is second-highest in the CIC. Professor Balas said that the decrease in cost that appears on one graph is artificial. Dean Bloomfield said he did not know where the decline came from. Michigan is at the top, most of the rest of the institutions fall in a band, and the lowest cost are the Indiana universities. So while Minnesota is third, it is part of a group of institutions whose cost differences are very small. The point is that the University is not an outlier.

There is a trend, however, that the University of Minnesota's costs are rising much more rapidly than other institutions, Professor Balas said. There has been a dramatic change in tuition the past three years, pushing Minnesota beyond its competitors. Dean Bloomfield responded that the University's competitors are suffering similar stresses; at the AAU meeting of graduate school deans, all were talking about whether faculty were replacing graduate students with postdocs and staff. It may be that the report should be more explicit on the issue. They talked about whether to reduce graduate tuition in order to make graduate students more affordable; the answer was "no" for two reasons. One, there would be political difficulties with charging non-resident graduate students less than resident undergraduates. Two, they emphasized this should not be a University-wide decision (the University should not give up these tuition revenues across the board; lower tuition would mean lower revenues available to the deans to pay salaries and other expenses). They did say, however, that individual units could take action, such as helping faculty with the cost of graduate students on grants. In an IMG framework, this is a local decision.

What explains the lower cost of graduate students at other institutions, Professor Johnson asked? What are the variations in the funding model? Is it different where institutions do not use an IMG model? Dean Bloomfield said that Professor Green tried to get at that question: to what extent do other universities subsidize the real cost of graduate education? Most don't; most try to recover the full cost. That does not mean there are not special deals in some parts of some universities, but most have the same philosophy: graduate education costs money and the institutions need to collect revenue to cover those costs. Most IMG universities started about the same time as Minnesota; Michigan adopted it earlier and then moved away from it.

Keeping salaries constant, the rates are going up, Professor Balas said; it appears there will be an 8% increase in costs. In IT, students must also pay an additional \$700-800 in fees each semester. Students are not getting rich but many faculty cannot support students. Every faculty member, however, is doing his or her utmost to do what they can. Dean Bloomfield said he did not believe that was true because there are places in the University where its peers (or higher) bring in 50-100% more grant funding per faculty member per year. The potential for providing support is not at its maximum in all areas.

What about the health benefits side, Mr. Hughey asked? And tuition? Both have gone up rapidly in the last few years, Dean Bloomfield said. To what extent is the legislative refusal to keep up funding for the University related to the increase in the cost of graduate students, Mr. Schumacher asked? It is directly related to the problem, Dean Bloomfield said; tuition has increased because the legislature is not paying the share of the cost of education that it has paid in the past. At the undergraduate level the tuition increases are cushioned by increases in financial aid, but graduate students are not eligible for financial aid so the cost increase goes directly to graduate and professional students.

Fellowships are essential to getting great students, Professor Balas said, but it is not clear the University is using the right model. Would it be better to have block grants and let departments compete for students? The task force tried to subdivide the problem into three elements, Dean Bloomfield told him: fellowships, TAs, and RAs. The University uses fellowships to attract talent, and it is the "talent magnet" argument that may be one place the University can reasonably ask for increased funding from the state. It used to be that TAs were cost neutral to colleges, because the tuition benefit was recaptured as tuition paid. Now, with a tax to central, there is a leakage in the system that costs the colleges. RAs are getting really expensive because of rapidly increasing tuition and fringe costs that must be paid from grants. Graduate programs, by better recruiting and careful program structure, could reduce RA costs by minimizing the time individuals spend as graduate students, and recruiting students who are less likely to drop out. They talk a lot about block grants in the Graduate School; there is a faculty committee that discusses the balance between them and fellowships and this is not a unilateral Graduate School staff decision. It must be understood that only one in three graduate fellowship offers is accepted; the remainder goes into the dissertation fellowship competition. Overall, there is a balance between predictable funds to programs and the competitive process that benefits the best programs.

Was there any discussion of incentive systems that could be in place, Professor Johnson inquired? Faculty bring in funds, which create a graduate education infrastructure, which the deans could match. They did not get into that issue, Dean Bloomfield said. The task force called for local thinking about arrangements should be. Each college has its own way of doing things, which is the philosophy of IMG. And with that philosophy, students could go to one college or another and the colleges could be pitted against one another, Professor Orf commented. He has not seen that happen, Dean Bloomfield replied; when departments share programs, they work out a modus operandi. When IMG was first adopted it was fairly well balanced, but there has not been a stable equilibrium. But even with the financial forces in play, they have worked to the same result.

One issue that could be controversial, Dean Bloomfield told the Committee, is whether there are ways to economize in the whole system in terms of the total cost of graduate education. That could mean reducing the population of graduate students in some areas. One example is Spanish: undergraduate demand is huge, and if graduate students served as TAs for all sections the department would have a huge number of graduate students, many more than it would make sense to have getting Ph.D.s. As a result, the department does most of its teaching with adjunct or contract faculty and keeps the number of

graduate students at a reasonable level. But there are some departments around the University that do a lot of service teaching and to some extent admit graduate students because they need TAs, not because the students will end up being the best Ph.D.s in the field.

What Dr. Bloomfield describes is driven by the reward system, Professor Balas said—bigger is better when it comes to the number of students in classes, because the more students, the more money the unit has. Dean Bloomfield agreed this is a systemic problem and all must buy into a solution. But it might not be the same solution in every unit. There is IMG and the compacts, Professor Balas said. Deans need to keep food on the table, through tuition revenue, and they will not change unless the Provost says their unit can get smaller if they increase quality.

Is there any easier a fix, Mr. Hughey asked? Is health care independent of the issue of funding from the legislature? Is the University trying to be innovative in dealing with health care costs? The University withdrew from the state plan a few years ago, Dean Bloomfield pointed out, and can chart its own course; it can negotiate its own student plan. He said he believes the University has a good plan for graduate students; graduate students generally feel it is a good deal and is a competitive advantage for the University. Last year the University said graduate students must pay 5% of the cost, which provoked grumbling because 5% of a large number is still a large number. They negotiate each year what will be in the benefit package. There is a cost to the University since all students are covered, but they do not want to push too many costs on to students because it would hurt the students and it would be anti-competitive. Graduate students are their own actuarial group, Dean Bloomfield confirmed. Have they thought about a higher deductible and a higher salary, Mr. Hughey asked? He has a lot of insurance that he never uses. Dean Bloomfield said he did not know if that would be possible; faculty and staff have choices but students have only one plan. He suggested Mr. Hughey talk to the Council of Graduate Students. Professor Seybold commented that in biomedical areas students use their health insurance a great deal.

In general, given what is happening in society in terms of support for K-12 and higher education, costs are going to go up, Professor Dahlberg commented. The University can do as much as it wants, but costs will still go up. He said he views training graduate students as part of his job; one can always get more work out of a postdoc but that is not part of his job description. The danger is when students are ABD and working like a postdoc; the postdoc is cheaper than the student even though both are in training. That is a conundrum, Dean Bloomfield agreed. NSF and NIH are both raising stipends for both predoctoral and postdoctoral trainees, so the question is how to balance them. The national labs now pay a postdoc \$50,000 to start, Professor Dahlberg said. One should not take for granted the assertion that postdocs are less expensive than graduate students, Dean Bloomfield said.

One thing that gets faculty upset about the cost of graduate education is the number of credits students must take after their classes are completed, Professor Gantt said. They talked about that on the task force, Dean Bloomfield said. The thesis credits are intended to reflect the fact that graduate students cost money even when they are ABD. If the University gives up thesis credits, it gives up about \$10 million per year in income. Deans could use some of that money to buy down the cost of graduate students for departments but then they would have less money for other things. Many universities do not have 24 post-prelim credits, and they could be put in the tuition band in order to buy them down for colleges. Professor Green found that most universities try to cover their costs in graduate education. The University does not identify those costs of education, Professor Gantt objected. They do not try to do cost accounting, Dean Bloomfield replied. If the amount of time before a student takes prelims is cut from three years to two, that would save a lot of tuition and fees and the programs would come to a new steady state.

Professor Balas encouraged Committee members with questions or concerns about the task force report to send them to him.

6. Discussion with the Provost about the Dean of the Graduate School and Vice Provost for Faculty and Academic Affairs Positions

Professor Balas now welcomed Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost E. Thomas Sullivan to the meeting to discuss the position of Dean of the Graduate School. Dean Bloomfield excused himself from the meeting for this portion.

Professor Balas began the discussion by asking if, with a new model, the Dean of the Graduate School would retain the authority to grant degrees or if that responsibility would be farmed out to departments or colleges. Provost Sullivan said the responsibility would remain where it is, with the Graduate School. The Committee discussed a number of issues with Provost Sullivan.

- The role of the Dean of the Graduate School vis-à-vis the colleges, and the quality control role the Dean plays, and the job description (the importance of the Dean having a vision, rather than simply running the office)
- The status of the search (recommendations of candidates is expected by 12/1)
- In an IMG environment, the leverage the Dean has (a question that will be looked at this year)
- The individual will be Dean AND Vice Provost, to elevate the position in the Provost's office so the individual speaks as a vice provost rather than as another dean, and so the person can bring the Provost into discussions of issues
- The initiatives in the biennial request, including funds for Graduate School initiatives
- They are committed to advancing graduate programs, which must be prominent at the University
- They will evaluate deans on the basis of the performance and status of the graduate programs in their colleges
- Funding for interdisciplinary work: the Provost's office decides jurisdiction and turf issues; the effort will be aided by setting priorities in the strategic planning process

Professor Dahlberg expressed a concern about the trend in research that ENTERPRISE is the focus of many things; at the same time, there is an emphasis on interdisciplinary research—getting funding for it, making tenure based on it, and so on. That takes money from elsewhere and he worries where that money comes from. It is individual faculty who make the reputation of the University and it will be detrimental for the University to damage its ability to recruit outstanding faculty and let them do their work--otherwise the University looks like a corporation. Provost Sullivan said he endorsed the thought. He agreed that this is all about the individual scholar, from the bottom up, and the focus should be on hiring stars or rising stars. He also noted the President has said there will be investments in new research; a substantial priority within that will be interdisciplinary research, illustrated for example in the President's initiatives. He agreed, however, that it all starts with the individual researcher. And the

administration should not impede scholarship with rules or regulations or advantages for interdisciplinary research, Professor Dahlberg added.

Professor Dahlberg said he worried about scholarship at the University. It appears that some departments have declined in quality or in the number of outstanding scholars they have. A great university has great scholars across the disciplines. How will the money be used to push certain initiatives? The mechanism will be the strategic planning process, Dr. Sullivan said. He identified the elements of the process and said that the final document will go to the Regents in February. Where will it lead? The framing concepts/goals/aspirations and criteria by which programs are measured will be identified and will provide a mechanism by which to identify priorities. The internal budget model will then be aligned with the principles and criteria so that all are consistent. The University will then be in a position to make choices about priorities and how to implement decisions. The goal is to align resources with the academic and intellectual goals of the University. If the goal is to be the top university in the world, then there would be a set of principles and criteria by which deans would be measured.

Is work in English and Philosophy and Journalism considered research, Professor Dahlberg asked? Are the terms research and scholarship synonymous when talking about being a great university? They are, Provost Sullivan affirmed.

Professor Balas inquired next about the status of the search for the Vice Provost. The position has been there a long time, Provost Sullivan said; it is the person who manages the promotion and tenure process. He has changed the job description substantially, and the title is Vice Provost for Faculty and Academic Affairs. The individual will be charged with looking at academic integrity and quality across the University, and with identifying and rewarding talent and leadership among the faculty. Many of the reward systems are in place (McKnight Professorships, etc.). The individual selected for the position will be expected not simply to do the day-to-day work of the office but also to step back and look across the University and to serve as the quality control officer in the Provost's office. It is a very big job.

He appointed a search committee that did work over the summer and identified three candidates (this is an internal search). He decided the process was moving too fast and that the pool could be broader and richer if the search were conducted during the academic year, so he asked the search committee to start over. He said he hoped to have someone appointed by the end of the semester. Professor Balas said it would be a good idea to get the message out that he is looking for the best faculty to step up to the position. Provost Sullivan said he has asked the search committee to be aggressive because this is a very important position, in his view. The person must make sure the University is making the right decisions in promotion and tenure and that it is making the right investments.

Professor Balas thanked Provost Sullivan for joining the meeting and adjourned it 3:05.

-- Gary Engstrand