

Minutes*

SENATE COMMITTEE ON FACULTY AFFAIRS

Thursday, April 8, 1993

3:15 p.m.

Dale Shephard Room, Campus Club

Present: Carl Adams (chair), Carole Bland, Daniel Canafax, Carol Carrier, Ann Erickson, Ann Fallon, Roger Feldman, Richard Goldstein, Audrey Grosch, Derek Jensen, Morris Kleiner, Steve Laursen, Richard McGehee, Dianne Mulvihill, Michael Sadowsky, Bernard Selzler, W. Donald Spring, Michael Wade

Absent: Mary Dempsey, Roger Paschke, George Seltzer, Judith Younger

Guests: David Berg, Marjorie Cowmeadow, Toni McNaron, June Nobbe, Timothy Rose

Chair's Report

Newly-appointed SCFA members Carole Bland and Derek Jensen were introduced and welcomed. Professor Adams also announced the appointment of Professor Donald Spring and Regents Professor George Wright to the Academic Integrity Committee.

Minutes

The March 4 and March 18 minutes were approved, as presented.

Private Practice Plans

Professor Adams asked the committee to consider for discussion at its next meeting whether it should pursue the issue of private practice plans, including the potential for application in units other than the Medical School.

Faculty Benefits Subcommittee

Professor Michael Wade, chair of the Faculty Benefits Subcommittee, reported on the following issues:

Pro-rated benefits--The subcommittee agrees with central administration's proposal to extend benefits, excluding health benefits, to faculty, academic administrators, and academic professionals with appointments between 67-99 percent time. It is proposed that this change be introduced on a trial basis July 1, 1993, to expire June 30, 1997.

Gun control Policy--Assistant Vice President Tschida has advised the subcommittee that under the Student Conduct Code, students are not permitted to carry weapons on campus. There is no

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comparable University policy for faculty or staff. The University is guided by State statute, however, which prohibits the carrying of weapons unless a permit is obtained.

Professor Wade will discuss with Assistant Vice President Tschida the possibility of the University being governed by appropriate city ordinances which do not permit weapons to be carried within city limits. The committee agreed it is important to distinguish between the carrying of concealed and non-concealed weapons so that individuals using the Armory range do not find themselves in the position of being in violation of University policy.

Sabbatical Leave Programs--There has been no formal response from the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs on the sabbatical proposal which SCFA reviewed last year. It is Professor Wade's understanding that the Administration is not opposed to the proposal in principle, but is concerned that approximately 1,400 faculty would be grandfathered in. For obvious reasons, this presents a very real administrative problem. The subcommittee will continue to pursue the issue with Associate Vice President Carrier and, hopefully, bring an amended proposal to one of the SCFA's May meetings.

Cafeteria Benefits The subcommittee has not aggressively pursued the issue of cafeteria benefits because the main source of revenue that could be reallocated in a flexible benefit plan would have to be from health benefits which, at this time, is not an option under the State Health Plan. The subcommittee will be exploring other options in this area.

Regents Scholarships for children of employees The subcommittee recently received a request to consider offering regents scholarships to children of employees and will be discussing that issue at its next meeting.

Select Committee on Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Concerns

Professor Wade reported that the Faculty Benefits Subcommittee supports the following recommendation of the Personnel and Benefits Subcommittee of the Select Committee and the Work Group on Domestic Partners:

That faculty, academic professionals, civil service, graduate students, and undergraduate students, domestic partners, and children of lesbian and gay employees receive the same benefits extended to the spouses and children of employees who are married.

At this time the subcommittee believes the recommendation should apply to same sex partners and not heterosexual couples who are not married.

The committee held a lengthy discussion on this issue, which focused primarily on the lack of clarity in the recommendation and discrepancies between the language of the "recommendation" and the "affidavit." If the committee supports the recommendation, which clearly makes sexual preference a criteria for eligibility, should not an individual be required to state his/her sexual preference on the Affidavit? Some argued that it is not necessary because sexual preference is implicit in the definition of "domestic partnership." However, the majority of the committee felt greater clarity was needed.

It appears, said one member, that it would be possible for two individuals of the same sex who are

neither gay nor lesbian to sign the Affidavit and receive benefits.

The committee also suggested the language in the recommendation be revised to more clearly reflect the intentions of the proposal, especially with regard to coverage for children. It is not clear whether the children of a domestic partner of a University employee are to be covered.

After recommending that appropriate student organizations also be consulted, the SCFA approved the following motion:

The Senate Committee on Faculty Affairs supports the domestic partner recommendation in principle and authorizes its Fringe Benefit Subcommittee to amend the language of the recommendation to clarify that children of domestic partners, including the children of either the employee/student or the partner, be eligible for benefits; and to amend the Affidavit of Domestic Partnership Registration to conform with the recommendation.

The revised proposal will be forwarded subsequently to the Faculty Consultative Committee.

Faculty Salaries

Professor Adams welcomed Mr. Dave Berg to the meeting and after a brief introduction of the issue, turned the discussion over to him. Mr. Berg distributed two schedules; one entitled SENPLAN, relates to a plan adopted by the University Senate approximately 10 years ago in which the Senate proposed that faculty salaries be brought back to the real income it had in 1972. The schedule, as calculated under the Senate proposal, shows that the faculty did, in fact, achieve its goals in 1989-90. The second schedule, entitled SWANPLAN, follows the methodology suggested by Professor Craig Swan, and others, and according to Mr. Berg, is the correct way to calculate the changes. The Senate plan tracked the current rank averages and the Swan plan tracked the averages based on the rank mixes that were present in 1972. The results are slightly different and under the Swan plan the Senate's goals have not been achieved.

Around 1989-90 Mr. Berg's office began comparing faculty salaries with other institutions and statistically the University does not compare favorably. A listing of the average 9 month cash salary (all ranks) of the 31 AAUP highest ranked universities was distributed. In terms of salaries, last year the University was ranked 26th and this year will be tied for 25th and 26th. In terms of quality, the University is ranked 13th.

Mr. Berg next distributed a handout showing the weighted nine month equivalent professorial cash salaries and total compensation of the Big Ten Universities for 1992-93. Minnesota is ranked fifth in terms of cash salaries and third in total compensation. The weighted average of Minnesota salaries relative to the other Big Ten schools is better this year than it has been for the past five years, Mr. Berg said. However, what these figures tell us, is that the Big Ten has slipped considerably relative to other universities.

Mr. Berg recently returned from the AAU data exchange meetings at which the public universities exchange their "best guesses" for salaries for next year. The University of California system, he said, has already decided that they will reduce cash salaries for all faculty and all other employees by 5 percent. Of the 18-20 public universities that ventured some sort of guess, California and three others said they might actually reduce salaries. Approximately four others predicted no salary increases. The highest estimate among 20 schools was 5 percent and that was by SUNY-Buffalo, which has experienced a salary freeze for

three years.

It is sometimes deceptive, one person noted, when an institution says it experienced zero salary increases because the steps are often moved up, with salaries increasing accordingly. Moreover, salary monies that are recaptured from positions that are turned over can be used to provide salary increases.

If a salary reduction were imposed, one person asked, what would happen to salary money not originating from the State, such as federal grants, private practice income, etc. Mr. Berg responded that the money provided through sponsored programs would have to be returned or re-justified. With regard, to private practice income, he declined to speculate. The University, he noted, has not experienced a salary reduction since 1935.

It was the chair's understanding that when the salary freeze was imposed during the last biennium, no changes to base salary were allowed. There are, however, other forms of compensation, including cash compensation, that are not included in an individual's base salary, especially in certain units. It is very difficult for the University to control these other forms of compensation.

The conversation turned to events at the Legislature. Mr. Berg reported that the Senate passed a bill that does not fund any salary or inflationary increases for two years and forbids tuition to be raised, which he noted, they cannot technically do. A draft of the House bill calls for the funding of non-salary lines at 3.5 percent the first year and funding of all lines (salary and non-salary) at 4 percent the second year of the biennium. The House bill contained the conditions that tuition must not rise more than 3.5 percent in each year unless the University can demonstrate that the amount it rises beyond 3.5 percent is being delivered directly as a quality improvement to students, and that the University must not lay-off more employees than was implied in the Governor's revised budget. Union negotiations were not considered in either proposal.

The University has impressed on the Legislature that it needs two kinds of flexibility: 1) the flexibility to meet retention cases and 2) the flexibility to vary the tuition schedule as long as the University stays within the general percentage increases.

There was some discussion about civil service salaries and, in particular, civil service administrative salaries. Mr. Berg said relative to the market (meaning other universities throughout the country), U of M clerical civil servants are in the best position; middle level administrators are somewhat underpaid; and top level administrators are considerably underpaid. In response to a question about civil service salaries keeping pace with inflation, Mr. Berg said it is about the same as faculty.

It was the opinion of some members that SCFA should consider making recommendations to the Faculty Consultative Committee with respect to faculty salaries for 1993-94 and beyond, including how increases can be sustained (e.g. programmatic reductions, efficiency improvements, tuition increases, productivity increases) even in years in which no salary dollars are provided by the State.

Discussion of this issue will continue at SCFA's next meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

-- Martha Kvanbeck