

Minutes*

SENATE FACULTY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
Thursday, January 20, 1994
3:15 - 5:15 p.m.
238 Morrill Hall

Present: Carl Adams (chair), Rose Brewer, Daniel Canafax, Ann Erickson, Daniel Feeney, Audrey Grosch, Richard McGehee, Dianne Mulvihill, Roger Paschke, Bernard Selzler, W. Donald Spring, James Stone, Yang Wang

Regrets: Carol Carrier, Mary Dempsey, Judith Gaston, Morris Kleiner

Absent: Carole Bland, Roger Feldman, Phuong Phan, Michael Sadowsky, George Seltzer

Guest: Mark Brenner

1. Continued Discussion on the Conflict of Interest Policy

Professor Adams described the tentative schedule which the policy will proceed through the governance structure. The final draft will be presented to the Faculty Consultative Committee (FCC) on February 3, and to the Faculty Senate on February 17. The committee was presented with a set of questions which addressed some of the more controversial aspects of the document. Dr. Brenner said that these questions surfaced from discussions with various committees and individuals at the University. A committee member addressed the definition of "family." Dr. Brenner explained that the document is to have the more comprehensive definition of "family" as opposed to the IRS definition discussed at the last meeting. He went on to say that self-referrals will be prohibited for full-time academic employees, and will require Category II-B review for those who work part-time.

Dr. Brenner also discussed the definition for "conflict of interest" as explained in the document. The definition is meant to clearly describe what is prohibited, what must be disclosed, and what is allowable.

Instructional Activities," Dr. Brenner said, will be described under review category II-A as follows:

An ACADEMIC EMPLOYEE assigning students or other trainees to instructional projects including design projects in which the ACADEMIC EMPLOYEE, a member of his/her FAMILY, or an ASSOCIATED ENTITY has a FINANCIAL INTEREST.

This will provide accountability for faculty or adjunct teachers who may have a "Financial Interest" in the product of a teaching assignment. A member said that such activity should not be prohibited. Dr. Brenner agreed and added that this will enable practical experiences to occur in the proper manner.

*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.

committee member said that he was concerned that the policy did not differentiate between full-time and part-time employees. Dr. Brenner explained that the following information would be included in the definition of "Academic Employee" to cover all parties fairly:

. . . someone who could significantly influence the accuracy of the outcome of the research or the timeliness and accuracy of the dissemination of the results of the research.

The committee member added that some academic employees may not be able to compromise themselves because they would not have the authority to do so. Academic employees should have the opportunity to demonstrate that they are not in a position to influence the outcome before the point of disclosure. Dr. Brenner said that this could be added as another "box to check" in the beginning process of disclosure.

Another member brought to the committee's attention the item of "Additional Information" on lines 200-202. The proposed changes would restrict the type of information gathering allowable during the review process, and read as follows:

When considering approval of Category II activities of monitoring Category III activities, the department head, dean, or appropriate vice president/vice chancellor may require the ACADEMIC EMPLOYEE to submit additional clarifying information pertinent to the activity under review. This supplemental information will be treated as confidential information.

The individual said he was pleased by this improvement.

Another member addressed the point of appointing members to the Conflict Review Committees. He recommended adding to the document that people actually engaged in outside consulting should be included on these committees. Dr. Brenner supported this idea as long as all committee members were not in such positions.

Dr. Brenner said that he will fax the final document to SCFA members on Tuesday, February 2.

A motion was proposed to accept the Conflict of Interest Policy on a contingent form given that SCFA would be able to review the document again if there were significant changes. This motion also included that if there were pivotal, unresolved items in the document, FCC would not present it to the Senate. Two members explained why they were going to vote against the acceptance of the policy.

The committee motioned to approve the document in principle presuming that SCFA would see a full copy of the final document, and that SCFA would have an opportunity through Dr. Brenner's comments to Professor Adams to make any serious defects in the policy known to FCC at its February 6 meeting. A majority of the committee approved the motion.

2. Chair's Report

Professor Adams said that the memo addressing faculty involvement in unit planning had been sent to the FCC. No consequence has been noted to date as a result of the correspondence. The chair said that he would follow-up by contacting the chair of the FCC. The most recent version of the U2000

document has even stronger exhortation to involve faculty, but does not include any structure of how this is to be accomplished.

The second item he mentioned was in regards to a memo sent to President Hasselmo about the attitudes of senior administrators toward faculty. The message was structured in such a way as to work toward constructive development of this issue. A 1-1/2 to 2 hour meeting was suggested between SCFA, the President, and his senior officers. No response had been received to date.

A planning group chaired by Vice President Infante has begun meeting and will be working toward the development of defining unit planning and University College as they relate to U2000, said Dr. Adams. Units have been instructed to communicate back to central administration by March 1 with their ideas for planning within their individual units. Revised versions of these plans are expected by the beginning of May. This schedule may be complicated because of upcoming budgets requests for next year, and the biennial request which will go before the governor this summer.

Professor Adams then discussed that the Board of Regents decided to limit the student tuition increase to 3% as opposed to the administration's recommendation of 5%. The chair of the Board of Regents and President Hasselmo was scheduled to meet with the FCC on Monday, January 24 to discuss the meaning of the Regents' decision.

3. Minutes

The minutes from December 14, 1993 and January 6, 1994 were approved.

4. Discussion on the Final Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Facilitation Transition for Maturing Faculty

Professor Adams said that the purpose of the task force was to make recommendations on retirement to the administration in the area of retirement. The intent of the report is to provide administration with suggestions from a faculty perspective so that it may proceed independently on behalf of the faculty. The task force decided not to recommend that those faculty working less than 67% should be able to possess tenure indefinitely.

A member addressed a issue related to health care insurance for faculty participating in early retirement. The current policy states that the University will pay the health care cost of a retired faculty member for a certain number of years or until he/she is eligible for Medicare. This same benefit is not awarded to the spouse, possibly leaving the couple at risk. The chair added that the spouse could pay to be included into the University's health insurance.

Finally, Professor Adams said the report committed SCFA to welcome a discussion with the administration on the "cost/benefit trade offs" of the recommendations.

5. Discussion of SCFA's Agenda for Winter and Spring Quarters

Professor Adams recommended that subcommittees and subcommittee chairs begin making suggestions for upcoming agendas. The chair requested for an administrative committee member to consider chairing the subcommittee dealing with advocacy programs.

Several committee members expressed concern about the status of the University's representation in state health insurance negotiations. Currently, the University uses the state health insurance system. A University representative was allowed to attend and present questions during negotiating proceeding between the state and its carriers until recently. The University now receives special briefings on these meetings which are adequate, but not best. A committee member suggested addressing this issue, and the general item of University use of the state health benefits system.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

-- Kevin Gormley

University of Minnesota