

[In these minutes: Faculty One Stop, Amendments to University Grievance Policy, Faculty Climate Survey, Academic Reports, Final Exam Dates, Workload]

Senate Committee on Faculty Affairs

Thursday, November 11, 1999

433 Johnston Hall

3:00 PM

MINUTES

[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 view, nor are they binding on the Senate or Assembly, the Administration, or the Board of Regents.]

Present: Richard Goldstein (Chair), Josef Altholz, Carole Bland, Carol Carrier, Robert Fahnhorst, Daniel Feeney, John Fossum, Roland Guyotte, Janet Holdsworth, Charlene Mason, Cleon Melsa, Marcia Pankake, James Perry, Geoffrey Sirc, Tom Walsh, Carol Wells

Regrets: Avner Ben-Ner, Andrea Hinding, Robert Jones, Sheila Warness

Absent: Meghan McCuley, Larry Miller

Guests: Michael Handberg, Eric Schnell, Jan Smith

1. Faculty One Stop - Presentation by Carol Carrier

Carol Carrier began the discussion about Faculty One Stop by noting the following:

- The purpose of the presentation is to recruit faculty members that will review and provide feedback on the Faculty One-Stop web sites.
- There are three strands to the Faculty One Stop web site: teaching, human resources, and research.
- The purpose of the web sites is to provide easy access to resources and electronic transaction capabilities.

Michael Handberg provided the committee with general information about the web site:

- The idea behind the One Stop web site is that it will be one of three marketing tools (others are phone and person-to-person) that will provide information to faculty, staff, and students.
- The site has been online since September and has received over 10 million hits so far.
- The site that is currently available for faculty is just the first attempt at pulling together appropriate information and revisions are needed.
- The site only provides information now, but one of the goals is to provide faculty with the capability to produce electronic transactions through the site.
- The feedback that has been received so far has been compiled, reviewed, and implemented by the oversight committee.
- One aspect still in development with the faculty site is the creation of "My One Stop" sites.
- Another task still to be undertaken is integrating management policies into one site.

Jan Smith discussed the Teaching strand of the site:

- The links that are located on the site go to existing sites, nothing new was created especially for this site.
- Each of the pages of the Teaching component has a preliminary organization that will be modified as more input is provided.
- The policy and off-campus sites are divided by area.
- It would be useful to know what faculty members would want or need for this site to make the site useful to them, particularly how the links should be named and which layers could be eliminated so the most useful information would be readily accessible.
- Currently, the site does not cover the sciences areas as well as the humanities areas.
- One goal is to add college policies to the site.

Comments:

- Links to individual departments would be useful.
- The list of policies that are currently available on the site does not include the Intellectual Property Policy.
- A link to the master room scheduling program should be developed to assist in that project.
- Privacy protection issues must be considered as this site is further developed.

Eric Schnell discussed the human resources component of the site with the committee:

- The site is actually a webfront for the Peoplesoft system and it is not clear how it should be organized to be the most effective.
- The current organizational scheme is to divide the information by service and life cycles.
- The main components of developing the site are integration, including all related links; and presentation, developing interface consistency.
- The developers are working with Disabilities Services to make sure all regulations are followed.
- Consideration of older computers handling the information has also been taken into account.
- The blueprint of how the site will be organized is a preliminary attempt at organizing all of the information that has been identified as necessary to be included on the site.
- The site incorporates the concept of distributed content management, meaning a change that affects more than one site only has to be made in one place and the change will automatically be made on the other sites.
- Still in development is a forms library.
- It has been decided that the site will be maintained by the creators of the site so all information is kept in one location.

Comments:

- Content development should be given as much consideration as link and organizational development.
- The teaching link available on this site does not go to the teaching component, but rather to the Center for Teaching and Learning web site.
- The site should include a search engine at the beginning.
- Similar sites should be developed for civil service and academic professional employees if that currently has not been considered.
- The language for the links and content should be reconfigured.
- The Death Benefits policy should be added to the site.
- Any other feedback can be sent to Eric Schnell.
- Geoffrey Sirc, Jim Perry, and Dick Goldstein agreed to serve as liaisons between the project and SCFA.

2. Action on Amendments to the University Grievance Policy - Presentation by Laura Cooper

Laura Cooper presented the proposed amendments to the University Grievance Policy:

- The proposed amendments will eventually go before the Senate for action.
- The current policy has been in place since 1993 and it mandates that review of the policy must take place.
- The intent of the policy is to solve any grievance as early as possible in the process.
- Statistics of the cases that have been filed are listed on page 2 of the report.
- Most complaints are resolved before the final stages of the process.
- A survey was conducted to find out if it was felt any changes were necessary, but the results showed that no major changes were.
- The revisions that have been suggested and will be acted upon can be found on pages 3-4 of the report.
- The Grievance Advisory Committee includes faculty, students, civil service, and academic employees and the committee reports to the President.

Comments:

- The change in the language regarding emeritus professors causes confusion because its intent is to relate to employment, but an interpretation of the current language could include benefits.
- By adding "currently" to the attorney definition, it provides clarification between those who are licensed to practice law and those who have had legal education.
- SCFA no longer has to make recommendations for faculty members on the advisory board. That role has been moved to the Committee on Committees.
- The policy is concise and logical.

3. Chair's Report

Professor Goldstein reported that the Regents' Faculty, Staff & Student Affairs Committee has issued their workplan and it will be distributed to members of SCFA since there are many issues that directly relate to the business of SCFA.

4. Approval of October 14, 1999 Minutes: The minutes were approved as presented.

5. Subcommittee Updates - Meeting schedules, workplans, draft mission statements/charges

Retirees' Subcommittee

Professor Feeney noted that the subcommittee is scheduled to meet in early December and issues that the group will discuss include retiree health benefits and the phased retirement program.

Benefits Subcommittee

Many of the issues that the group will consider throughout the year are listed on the 1999-00 Issues list that was distributed at the meeting. In particular, the group will consider the faculty development leave policy, travel insurance, the salary study currently being conducted by the Senate Finance and Planning Committee, and tuition benefits for employees and their family members.

6. Review of SCFA Charge - Development of working group

Carole Bland, Tom Walsh, Dan Feeney, and Dick Goldstein will provide suggested revisions to the main charge of the committee at an upcoming SCFA meeting.

7. Faculty Attitudes/Characteristics Survey

The following comments were made about the Faculty Climate Survey:

- Professors Bland and Wells considered the survey that was conducted a few years ago and provided the committee with their thoughts and concerns.
- The reason why this survey is being considered is to determine if it should be conducted again and what modifications are required.
- The results from the survey that was conducted a few years ago will be available in 2001.
- The purpose of the original survey was to measure morale and determine issues of concern during the Tenure wars.
- It may be beneficial to conduct the survey every few years so the results are more accurate in reflecting the current climate.
- The survey could be conducted on the web to attract more responses.
- The original survey was conducted via e-mail and it was not user-friendly.
- The survey questions should be clustered more than they are now.
- The information that the survey could provide would be for the President and Board of Regents, but they are too overwhelmed with other issues right now to consider the results.
- The interpretation process of the survey should be as fair as possible and not lump mid-range answers with one extreme or the other.
- The length of the survey is under dispute. Should it stay the same or become longer or shorter.
- It is unclear why the gender question has three choices.
- Asking that only one item be circled is too limiting.
- Questions that relate to specific college issues should be included to get a more accurate reading at the college level.
- The original survey was developed around the benchmarks listed under the Critical Measures.
- The response rate will be high if people understand the survey relates to how they feel about their relationship with the University.
- There is a difference between length and depth in surveys.
- Having a scale for answering the questions allows for more freedom.
- All of the questions that relate to the diversity climate should be removed since that is not something of concern anymore.
- There is inconsistency in the scope of the questions, which could cause many different interpretations of the questions.
- Who would administer the survey?
- Darwin Hendel will be invited to a future meeting to discuss the rationale behind the current survey.
- Carole Bland, Carol Wells, Jim Perry, and Tom Walsh agreed to develop a revised survey.
- The survey should include questions about the libraries and access to materials.
- Some questions should be those found on other institution's surveys so comparisons can be made between the University and other institutions.

8. Other Business

Final Examinations Dates

The following comments were made about the current final exam dates:

- The current calendar calls for final exams to be given through the evening of December 23.
- Students and faculty are annoyed with the way that date affects travel arrangements and that there is a study day that could be used for exams.
- The exam schedule should be compressed since there could be problems with conducting exams at earlier dates.

Report on Academic Appointments

The following comments were made about the academic appointments issue:

- John Brandl will be invited to an upcoming meeting to discuss the report of the Working Group that he is heading.
- The SCFA problem has not been addressed in the working group report so SCFA should decide how to handle that if the trend of hiring less tenure track faculty and more term faculty is to end.

Workload

The following comments were made about faculty workloads under the semester system:

- It is not clear at what level workloads are decided, but it should become consistent across the University.
- Faculty from CLA and GC will be invited to an upcoming meeting to provide more insight on the issue.

9. Adjournment: Professor Goldstein adjourned the meeting at 4:45 p.m.