

CLASSROOM ADVISORY SUBCOMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MEETING
JANUARY 25, 2002

[In these minutes: Welcome and Introductions, Legislative Briefing Update, Preparation for Meeting with Senior Administrators Concerning the Classroom Technology Upgrade Funding Issue]

[These minutes reflect discussion and debate at a meeting of a committee of the University of Minnesota Senate or Twin Cities 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.]

PRESENT: Denise Guerin, Chair, Steve Fitzgerald, Bernard Gulacheck, Kenneth Heller, Jane Phillips, Martin Sampson, Steven Sperber, Ryan Osero, Jonathan Suk

REGRETS: Steve Spehn, William Hanson, James Perry, Nelson Rhodus

ABSENT: Bobbi Cordano, Janice Smith

I). Professor Guerin called the meeting to order, welcomed all those present and asked members to introduce themselves.

II). Professor Guerin and Steve Fitzgerald, Director of the Office of Classroom Management, provided Committee members with a brief update on the legislative briefing that took place Tuesday, January 22, 2002 at the McNamara Alumni Center. Alumni Association members, legislators and key supporters of the University were invited to receive an update on the University's capital funding request. The alumni then become the volunteers for lobbying legislators on behalf of the University for its various capital requests. Out of the total \$280 million that the University has put forward in capital requests, there is a line item for \$4 million earmarked for system-wide classroom improvements.

At this point, the classroom improvement project is one of a relatively few items that the Governor has indicated he is willing to support. Recognizing, however, that it is still very early in the process, only time will tell how this line item will fare when all is said and done. It is important to note that seeking legislative funding is only one of several avenues being pursued for securing funds for the Classroom Technology Upgrade Project.

III). The Committee reviewed and thoroughly discussed an outline of questions to be put forward to senior administrators at an upcoming meeting concerning what can be done to make the Classroom Technology Upgrade Plan a budget priority for the University. Committee members shared the following comments and ideas:

- Provide administrators with specific, briefly written case studies of technology deficient or technology enhanced classrooms – one from a student’s perspective, one from a faculty recruitment position and yet another from a faculty viewpoint. Professor Martin Sampson agreed to write a short paragraph from a faculty recruitment perspective, Jonathan Suk and Ryan Osero each agreed to write a paragraph from a student’s perspective and Professor Heller agreed to write a paragraph from a faculty viewpoint. It was further mentioned that getting a brief statement from Wayne Sigler, Director of Admissions, succinctly stating his concern about not having technology enhanced classrooms for incoming freshman might reinforce the point even further. Professor Guerin volunteered to contact Mr. Sigler to see if he would be willing to put his concerns in writing. Providing administrators with contrasting case studies of well-equipped and well-maintained classrooms as well as technology deficient classrooms should have a significant impact. Case studies are due to Renee Dempsey Senate staff, on February 8th and will be forwarded on to Professor Guerin for review and distribution to Committee members prior to the next meeting.
- Don’t focus too much of the Committee’s energy on a restatement of a problem that everyone already agrees is a problem. Rather steer the discussion towards what can be done to fix the problem!
- Don’t site examples to senior administrators that are peripheral to technology i.e. classrooms with physical and/or structural inadequacies such as columns in the way etc. Efforts must be focused on securing funds to technologically enhance classrooms. The most emergent need is technology and it is significantly cheaper to technologically upgrade a classroom than it is to structurally renovate a classroom. Emphasize to the administration that installing technology is the least expensive approach they can take to make classroom space more effective right away. The average cost to upgrade a classroom with technology is \$31,000.
- The Committee agreed to try to invite both Vice President Kvavik and Vice Provost Swan to the next meeting. It was further mentioned that Vice President Kvavik is well informed on this issue and was coauthor of the University’s major classroom study in 1995. This study defined the problems facing classrooms and led to the formation of the Office of Classroom Management.
- Solicit strategic ideas from senior administrators, who have seen both successful and unsuccessful campaigns for funds, on what tactics have worked and which ones have failed.
- Point blank ask the administration whether they are satisfied with a ten-year completion plan as opposed to the four-year plan that was initially proposed and supported. Moreover, make it known that the acceptance of a ten-year plan means the administration is supporting a “never-completion plan.”
- In a non-adversarial approach, ask the administration what is it about this project that has such broad support, that doesn’t warrant the administration’s attention?
- Allow senior administrators to see the Committee’s frustrations and passion concerning this issue in an attempt to change the way classrooms are funded at the University.

To conclude, it was agreed that the Committee should meet with senior administrators regarding this issue no later than the third or fourth week in March to have an impact this summer in order to affect teaching in Fall 2002. If the Committee can make this project a high enough priority for the administration then hopefully the next Executive Vice President and Provost will embrace the project as a high priority issue.

Renee Dempsey, Senate staff, was charged with scheduling Vice President Robert Kvavik and Vice Provost Craig Swan for the Committee's next meeting. It was further mentioned that Ms. Dempsey should schedule EVPP Bruininks and Budget and Finance Vice President and CFO, Richard Pfutzenreuter to meet with the Committee as well to discuss this same issue. Ms. Dempsey will arrange these meetings and confirm dates and times with Committee members.

IV). With no further business, Professor Guerin adjourned the meeting.

Renee Dempsey
University Senate