

AHC Faculty Consultative Committee

June 13, 2000

Minutes of the Meeting

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.

PRESENT: Muriel Bebeau (chair), Timothy Wiedmann, James Boulger, Daniel Feeney, Judith Garrard, Kathy Krichbaum, Stephanie Valberg

REGRETS: Robert Miller, Patricia Ferrieri

Professor Bebeau provided a brief update on the visioning process. She indicated that committee members would be receiving a revised copy of the visioning document that was presented to the Regents Subcommittee the previous week. The FCC will discuss the report with Dr. Cerra at the June 21 meeting. Professor Bebeau cited the initiation and implementation of the visioning process as one of the committee's major accomplishments over the past year. One member asked about the Regents response to the report. Professor Bebeau responded that she has found them very supportive. She said she believes that the Regents really understand the magnitude of the financial problems facing the AHC. The Regents Subcommittee has a meeting scheduled on June 26 to discuss the revised report as it relates to the visioning process.

Next, Professor Bebeau highlighted a few other accomplishments of the AHC governance structure over the past year. Professor Dan Feeney (chair) and members of the Finance and Planning Committee were given accolades regarding their work. The Faculty Affairs Committee, while slow in getting started, intends to review policies on post tenure review; annual review process and procedures; and compensation in the coming academic year. One of the reasons Faculty Affairs has not started up is because an effort to collect all of these documents from all the colleges. Most colleges cooperated and by April most of the documents were collected. Professor Ted Oegema has agreed to chair the Faculty Affairs Committee this year and has indicated that the committee will begin work on the policy review this summer.

Professor Feeney reported that the F&P Committee is completing a report on the financial issues relating to Fairview-UM Hospital and Outpatient Clinics and the Medical School Finances. The final report will be posted on the Senate web site. F&P is also finishing up the results of the compensation survey. Complete information regarding the survey will also be posted on the Senate web site. In addition, the results of the survey will be published in the AHC News. The F&P Committee will meet throughout the summer.

The FCC will not meet in July but will resume its meeting schedule in August. Members should begin thinking about the selection of a new chair. Professor Bebeau indicated she would not consider serving again since she served as chair for two years and will be serving on the University FCC the coming academic year as well as serving out her term on the AHC FCC.

Next, committee members moved on to discuss the final item - the Faculty Research Development Program. Professor Bebeau indicated she had invited Mark Paller to the meeting but he had a scheduling conflict. He may decide to meet with the Committee at the beginning of its meeting with SVP Cerra.

Based on the materials Mr. Paller sent to committee members, Professor Bebeau pointed out that there had been four rounds of proposal review. The first round went to the core facilities, primarily for equipment grants. The second and third rounds were competitive interscholastic grants in the \$200,000 range. The fourth round went to funding the Biomedical Genomics projects. The upcoming round is scheduled again to focus on genomics research. The proposals must fall into Genomics basic research, Genomics ethical, social, environmental, or applied aspects, or translational research.

During Professor Bebeau's discussion with Mr. Paller, she raised a number of questions regarding outcomes of the grants after 3-4 years; final reports; and, the rationale for focusing on Genomics. With respect to Paller's response about Genomics, she said that the AHC Council of Research Deans determined that Genomics should be supported and that the Deans Council agreed that instead of having one cycle of funding support this "important area" that it should be funded for an additional cycle. She said she reminded Mr. Paller about the FCC's view of the earlier process of interscholastic/interdisciplinary funding. Last year the Committee had questions about how the review committees got appointed as well as comments about the decisions made at the Dean's Council level (there was a perception among faculty

that sometimes the decisions made were political decisions). She noted that the current document about the review process does not reflect the issues raised by the FCC in March of 1999 (information regarding earlier discussions were distributed to Committee members prior to the meeting).

At this point, Professor Bebeau opened the floor for discussion. The following points, observations, questions were raised by Committee members:

- The research group that reported to the Regents Subcommittee raised concern about how focused some things were becoming, such as Genomics. This comes at the expense of other areas that are equally viable and perhaps more scientific rather than technical. A comment was made at that meeting that "some of this will be available in kits from manufacturers in five to ten years." Large quantities of money are being poured into Genomics at the behest of deans or at the behest of individuals who are into it. Is Genomics the only thing the AHC is going to do?
- There will always be special interest groups who will lobby for what they want and powerful groups with the same interest will lobby together.
- What is the goal? What are the long-term effects of focusing on a particular area?
- Should the AHC be investing in a particular area, or top-notch scholars? Should not the top-notch scholars address the important new frontiers and let them develop proposals rather than support what is on the front page of Time magazine?
- To what extent are those in Genomics research becoming nationally competitive instead of drawing down on the few resources in the AHC? To what extent is the Genomics group going after that PA?
- As long as there is no reporting and outcome mechanisms built into these proposals, there will always be special interest groups that will be able to leverage the current situation. Expectations and consequences need to be very clear.
- Concern was expressed about restricting the grant categories to a specific area - all which happen to be in the area of Genomics.
- Collectively, Committee members had expressed their fears at a meeting with the SVP about Genomics becoming a "black hole" into which all future money would be poured.
- Committee members had also stressed to the SVP (at that same meeting) that other grants should not be dropped because of the support for Genomics.
- Proposals should all have to go through the competitive process. Committee members understood that the Genomics project was to be funded from other sources other than the \$1.5 million earmarked for research development grants. However, the document provided by Mark Paller indicate that the only proposals that will be funded through the competitive process are tied to the area of Genomics.
- Have the discussions with the Regents Subcommittee regarding the vision for the AHC been only about Genomics? Those who attended the Regents Subcommittee meetings responded that discussions have not been solely about Genomics.
- In light of their earlier discussion with SVP Cerra, Committee members expressed their disappointment and frustration because they felt they had not been heard with respect to the issues and concerns raised about focused allocation for the Genomics Project and the current eligibility and evaluation criteria for submitting proposals to fund faculty research.

The following resolution was made and approved unanimously by all Committee members present.

The AHC FCC strongly opposes the allocation of monies in any focused area or strategic categories and requests that the process to support funding for interdisciplinary education and research is done in a competitive and fair process, open to all.

Committee members indicated they would like the SVP to provide them with the following information:

- Update on feedback given to the SVP regarding the Genomics document
- The reason why there is a new or revised process for funding proposals.
- The reporting requirements for the funded proposals - specifically what will be the limits on application for funding and the expectations for outcomes related to the funding. What has been the pay-off?
- Request clarification on funding sources to support Genomics and strategic categories as well as the monies earmarked for the support funding competitive proposals.
- Who appoints the review panel?

OTHER BUSINESS

Professor Bebeau reported that the Research Visioning Task Force has suggested that there is a need for an Office of Research Facilitation. Several Committee members reacted negatively to this and opined that this would simply add another

layer.

Professor Bebeau has been asked by the University FCC to provide an overview of the work of the AHC FCC and "progress report" at the August FCC meeting.

Hearing no further business, Professor Bebeau adjourned the meeting.

Vickie Courtney

University of Minnesota