

AHC Faculty Consultative Committee
Minutes of the Meeting
December 11, 2001

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:

Marc Jenkins (chair), Mickey Bebeau, Chris Mueller, Ron Sawchuk

REGRETS:

James Boulger, Mike Murphy, Denis Clohisy, Ted Oegema, Dan Feeney

ABSENT: Jean Forster

Professor Jenkins called the meeting to order and began a discussion about tenure/tenure track faculty positions in the AHC compared to contract categories.

Professor Jenkins indicated he would work from the web to obtain as much information as possible. Vickie Courtney is working with Barbara Brandt's office to collect information as well. Vickie will also obtain from SVP Cerra's office the instruction plans and principles for filling out the academic plans.

Members expressed an interest in seeing the academic plans after they are turned in to SVP Cerra.

Members then engaged in a discussion regarding voting privileges of faculty in the Dental School.

The Dental School has had a constitution, but no bylaws. A committee was put together to develop bylaws. Most recently, the Dental School

voted to extend full voting rights to anyone who plays two of the three faculty roles.

It does not specify a distinction between tenured faculty and contract faculty. If not a tenured faculty, the person must hold a 75% appointment and the department chair would verify that the person plays two of the three roles. It was the tenure/tenure track faculty who voted to do this (by one vote).

This change in the constitution will then go to SVP Cerra for approval. It was noted that in past discussion, SVP Cerra indicated he would not support a constitution that did not hold the tenure faculty in control of faculty issues. Committee members agreed they would continue to encourage SVP Cerra to not support such a change in the Dental School's constitution.

Professor Jenkins will send an email to Dr. Cerra and ask that he hold on any decision for the Dental School constitution until the committee has had an opportunity to consult with him.

Because of the tenure code, contract faculty would not be able to vote on tenure decisions, but they would be allowed to vote on all issues of curriculum and governance.

Professor Jenkins said he would talk to Professor Oegema, chair of the AHC Faculty Affairs Committee, to talk about how the committees might work together on the academic appointment issue.

Next, Professor Jenkins reported that he met with the AHC Finance & Planning Committee to discuss the Financial Report the F&P Committee had prepared.

The report was for the most part, a comparison of the AHC financials versus the rest of the University. Another issue the AHC F&P Committee plans to address is the raise plans that give raises to faculty but not to their tenure protected base. Members of the AHC FCC expressed an interest in keeping apprised of this issue.

Committee members then went on to discuss governance structures within the various colleges/schools. Based on the discussion, there appears to be no parallel structures.

Ms. Courtney noted that members of the AHC FCC are elected by the faculty from within the respective college/school, not appointed.

Lastly, Professor Jenkins directed members' attention to an essay regarding faculty evaluations and looking at measures of research excellence. If other institutions are doing this, he said, they are doing it in a covert way because he was not able to find much information on it. He said he has sent an email out to various individuals asking if anyone knows of any universities using bibliometric methods as adjuncts to their other criteria they use to make decisions about research performance. Professor Jenkins asked members to review the articles before further discussions are had.

Concern has been expressed about measures because administrators at some institutions have misused this kind of information. On the pro side, he said, these kinds of analysis can be objective and can reveal leaders in their fields but are otherwise unappreciated at their own institutions and could be the best objective way to identify excellence.

The strategic plan says that "we are deficient in identifying excellence" and need to explore developing methodology that can identify excellence so it can be used to determine whether the AHC is going in the right direction, hiring the right people and retaining the right people. Will teaching be included, one member queried. Professor Jenkins believed that is was but the emphasis was on excellence in research. Committee members spent additional time talking about indicators for identifying excellence and how that might be used in promotion and tenure.

Professor Jenkins then directed members' attention to a document from the Royal Academy of Engineering listing possible components of the measures of research excellence and suggested this as one way to identify excellence.

Before adjourning the meeting, Professor Jenkins asked Committee members to search the web and see what they could find on methodology identifying excellence.

Vickie Courtney
University Senate