

Minutes

Joint Meeting Senate Consultative Committee Task Force on Support Services May 15, 1989

Present (SCC): Mark Brenner (chair), Andrew Collins, Warren Ibele, J. Bruce Overmier (also on the TFSS), W. Phillips Shively, Michael Steffes, Charlotte Striebel

Present (TFSS): Richard Goodrich (chair), Ellen Dahl, Vernon Eidman, Ivan Fletcher, Edward Foster, Virginia Gray, Darrell Lewis, J. Bruce Overmier (also SCC), Myrna Smith, Carol Balthazor (staff), Joan Estenson, Patrick Opatz (graduate assistants)

Guests: Gayle Grika (Footnote)

Professor Brenner welcomed everyone to the meeting; Professor Goodrich then opened the presentation of the Task Force by emphasizing that the report which had been provided to the Consultative Committee members was still a draft and that this copy should not be circulated prior to the preparation and release of the final report. He also noted that the report would be structured so that its recommendations would not be confused with administrative actions which had been or should be taken.

A cover letter will transmit the report to deans, directors, and department heads; Professor Brenner suggested that it include an "action date" by which the recipients should communicate their reactions, recommendations, and comments on the report to the Consultative Committee. It was agreed that this deadline should be June 30.

Members of the several Task Force subcommittees which studied specific support service units in depth made brief presentations on the recommendations contained in the Task Force report and the reasons therefore. Following those presentations several issues were raised:

- The Task Force report calls for the appointment of several faculty/academic administrator advisory or consultative committees, each of which are to serve a number of support service areas; these committees are to be charged with responsibility for providing review and advice on broad policy and strategic planning issues, not to be involved in operational details. The committees would also meet with the appropriate vice president to advise him or her on the units under its purview as well as provide comments on the performance of the unit head, which comments should be taken into account when salaries are set. There was brief discussion on the merits and disadvantages of appointing a number of these committees, but the arguments for the need for continuity, for providing continuing "feedback" to the units, and for annual comment on unit heads militated in favor of standing committees rather than ad hoc semi-decennial groups. Task Force members were asked how these advisory committees were to be appointed; it was suggested that they might be designated by, and responsible to, the new Assembly Committee on Support Services. Professor Brenner agreed that this question should be taken up by the Faculty Consultative Committee.

- The role of the faculty in governing intercollegiate athletics was questioned, in light of the Task Force recommendations that its scope be narrowed to academic matters. It was argued, without corresponding dissent, that while most presidents would prefer to do away with athletics altogether, such a move would be difficult; barring that

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draconian step, there is a need to bring the athletic enterprise more into accord with the academic values of the University.

- The requirement that academic units pay for the services provided by the support service units seems to pervade the report and the operation of those support units. There seems, however, to be no concomitant recognition that the academic units are paying the salaries of those in the support services and seems also to be no responsibility on the part of those in the support units to serve well the academic units for which they work.
- Whether or not, in a number of areas, there could not be a more effective and efficient reliance upon outside contractors rather than University support service units.
- The need for coordination of Physical Planning and Physical Plant.

Professor Brenner inquired whether Task Force members believed there were sufficient specifics contained in the report that the central administration could understand and act on the real points that were being made. Professor Goodrich responded that they did not wish to make the report any longer but that the subcommittees could be called back by administrators if more detail or information were needed. Associate Vice President Foster suggested that the administration should report to the Consultative Committee on the implementation of the Task Force recommendations.

It was also suggested that as individuals are appointed to the several open administrative positions at the University, they be asked to meet with the appropriate subcommittees of the Task Force to review the findings.

As far as the advisory committees are concerned, it was contended that those who are appointed should be given the materials and readings which the Task Force was provided so that they understand the broader issues and missions of the units. In the past the committees that did exist were more often used for operational feedback rather than strategic planning. It was also noted that these committees will only be as important and strong as the administration wants them to be.

The side comment was made that the members of the Assembly Committee on Support Services (three of whose members are from the Task Force) should be given a seminar on the business operations of the support service units, that the Committee be given good staff support, and that its members serve longer terms.

Several members of the Consultative Committee expressed their appreciation for the thoroughness and effectiveness of the work of the Task Force and strongly commended Task Force members for their commitment and the quality of their report.

The meeting adjourned at 11:15.

-- Gary Engstrand