

Minutes*

**Assembly Steering Committee
11:00 - 11:30
Thursday, April 1, 1993
Room 238 Morrill Hall**

- Present: Mario Bognanno (chair), Amos Deinard, Judith Garrard, Benjamin Liu, Karen Seashore Louis, Toni McNaron, Irwin Rubenstein, Anne Sales, Tess Sheir, James Tracy, James VanAlstine, Shirley Zimmerman
- Regrets: None
- Absent: John Adams, David Dahlgren, Derek Jensen, Denise Tolbert
- Guests: Professor Warren Ibele (chair of the Assembly Steering Committee when the ad hoc committee on athletics was appointed), Professor Burton Shapiro (chair, ad hoc committee on intercollegiate athletics)
- Others: Lester Drewes, Paul Holm, Maureen Smith (Brief)

[In these minutes: report of the ad hoc committee on athletics]

Professor Bognanno convened the meeting at 11:10 and welcomed Professor Shapiro to the meeting to introduce the report of the ad hoc committee on intercollegiate athletics. (The ad hoc committee was charged by the Steering Committee to review and make recommendations on the governance of athletics on the Twin Cities campus.)

The fundamental issue at hand, Professor Shapiro suggested to the Committee, is whether or not there is adequate faculty oversight of intercollegiate athletics at the University. The ad hoc committee spent a LOT of time taking with individuals, including people who had been on or are on the Assembly Committee on Intercollegiate Athletics (ACIA)--many of whom said different things in private to the ad hoc committee than they said in public. That difference in their comments is a significant piece of the background to the report, Professor Shapiro cautioned.

Is academic oversight being accomplished? The answer, the ad hoc committee concluded, is a resounding "no." A big part of the problem identified by the ad hoc committee is the structure of the ACIA. The ad hoc committee recommends an all-faculty committee, with representation from all other groups (students, alumni, civil service) removed.

If one reads the ACIA response to the ad hoc committee report, Professor Shapiro noted, one would conclude that the ad hoc committee was made up of dolts. That, however, was clearly not the case, in that its members were knowledgeable about athletics and also distinguished members of the faculty. It

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was also a diverse and contentious group, he commented, and said he would not want to go through the experience again. The ad hoc committee did agree on ground rules for its discussions, and unanimously endorsed the conclusions of the report.

Professor Shapiro then described the ad hoc committee's view of how ACIA operates and what it does. One concern is that there are too many non-academic issues taken up (e.g., athletic facilities). Another is that the faculty majority is so narrow that it does not function as a majority. The core activity of ACIA, in the view of the ad hoc committee, should be the maintenance of academic standards. The level of tension at ACIA meetings is sometimes not what it should be at a governance committee, and the function of some of the individuals at the meetings appears to be to divert issues from the administration.

In an earlier draft of their report, the ad hoc committee had recommended the creation of two committees, one all-faculty committee to deal with academic matters, and one composed of representatives from various other constituencies to deal with non-academic matters; there would have been some overlap in membership to ensure appropriate conduct of business. This seemed to the ad hoc committee the "cleanest" approach. The President and the two athletic directors, however, opposed the idea of working with two committees. Moreover, the ad hoc committee was informed that the non-faculty constituencies are represented in a variety of councils and committees that work with the athletic departments, so removing them from ACIA would not have a deleterious impact on governance.

Inasmuch as the charge to ACIA, in the view of the ad hoc committee, should be academic standards and issues, ACIA should be composed exclusively of faculty members, because those are faculty responsibilities.

Two of the most recent chairs of ACIA have endorsed the report, Professor Shapiro also reported.

Asked about the differences in what people said publicly and privately, Professor Shapiro said the comments revolved around whether or not the job of protecting and promoting academic standards was being done. Publicly people will say the job is being done; privately, they said not. The academic audits of the teams have not been performed as they should have, for instance; often reports are supposed to be provided, but are not; there appears to be no follow-through on issues; it is not clear that academic standards are being made clear during the recruiting process. One Committee member said he had also noted the tension, at a meeting with NCAA representatives, and thought it was unhealthy. Another Committee member said she too sensed a sigh of relief when she raised the question about academic oversight. She was pleased to hear from the NCAA representatives their complimentary views toward ACIA. Moreover, she indicated the NCAA representatives had noted that no other program of which they were aware had a faculty-only athletic governance committee.

Committee members inquired why it was necessary to exclude students from ACIA. Professor Shapiro explained that the logic of excluding all but faculty members made sense; once, however, other groups were admitted to representation, the ad hoc committee did not believe it could draw a line to recommend representation for some and deny it to others.

Concern was also expressed about the lack of student representation on the ad hoc committee. Copies of a letter from an absent student member was circulated, protesting the lack of student participation and calling for the ad hoc committee to be reconstituted. Two students were originally

appointed, but they never attended the meetings. There was a delay in the start of the work of the ad hoc committee, Professor Shapiro reported, which may have been a factor--the delay was the result of ACIA expressing resentment that the ad hoc committee had been appointed to review its role. Nor, he added, is an all-faculty committee without precedent, particularly when its responsibilities include the review of individual student records. Students on the Committee agreed that students should not be involved in review of other students' records, but pointed out that broader policy issues are also considered by ACIA. Other Committee members--faculty--said that students and faculty members are most involved in academic matters, and one can make an argument that those two groups--but no others--should make up ACIA. It was also noted that when NCAA representatives visited the campus, they were impressed with the scope of the committee and that an all-faculty committee might be too narrowly-comprised, in comparison to other institutions.

It must be recalled, Professor Shapiro told the Committee, that ACIA is charged to deal with academic issues, not the management or place of athletics at the University. The issue, really, is "what is the business of the Faculty Assembly? And what is the business of its committee?"

Professor Bognanno then turned to Professor Ibele for comments. Professor Ibele said this issue is one that the Assembly has spent more time on, with less effect, than any other he could recall. Any university president, asked if he or she could start over at ground zero, would certainly not erect an entertainment enterprise on the campus. This report, he told the Committee, is a modest proposal, from his perspective. The current men's faculty representative to the Big Ten and NCAA, Law School Dean Robert Stein, is a fine person--but he is not a "faculty member" in this capacity. The faculty presence on ACIA, by his count, is 6 out of 14 members.

What is always astonishing, Professor Ibele observed, is the metamorphosis of people who serve on ACIA--some of whom have come from the Faculty Consultative Committee. Things seem to happen to them. But there is a clear structural problem: the faculty voice is not strong enough and it is not clear enough.

A few Committee members said that except for the inclusion of students on ACIA, they thought the ad hoc committee report was fine. It was agreed that the Committee would hear from Professor Chervany, chair of ACIA, and then decide on the disposition of the report and its recommendations. No options were foreclosed, Professor Bognanno assured the students. Professor Shapiro accepted the comments of the Committee members but warned that they should "disabuse themselves of the notion that ACIA is OK" because many people have spoken to the contrary.

Professor Bognanno adjourned the meeting at 11:45.

-- Gary Engstrand