

Minutes*

**Senate Consultative Committee
Thursday, February 2, 1995
12:30 - 3:00
Room 238 Morrill Hall**

Present: John Adams (chair), Carl Adams, Joel Bergstrom, Thomas Burk, Sheila Corcoran-Perry, Sara Evans, Virginia Gray, James Gremmels, Kenneth Heller, Roberta Humphreys, Robert Jones, Geoffrey Maruyama, Donald Ness, Harvey Peterson, Chad Reichwald, Tim Stanislawski, Michael Steffes, Rabun Taylor, Barbara Thompson

Regrets: Lester Drewes

Absent: Brandon Lujan

Guests: Professors Mary Lou Fellows, William Flanigan (chair and vice chair, Assembly Committee on Intercollegiate Athletics)

Others:

[In these minutes: Student lobbying; SCEP resolutions on the Morse-Alumni award and changed preparation standards; approval of dockets; academic audits by the Assembly Committee on Intercollegiate Athletics]

1. Items of Committee Business

Professor Adams convened the meeting at 12:45 and enumerated several items to be taken up:

- student lobbying plans
- motions from the Senate Committee on Educational Policy (SCEP)
- approval of Senate and Assembly dockets
- discussion of Assembly Committee on Intercollegiate Athletics activities, and specifically the academic audit process

He then turned to Mr. Taylor for discussion of the student lobbying issue.

Mr. Taylor began by recalling that SCEP had voted--correctly, in his view--not to recommend that students be excused from classes for student lobby day at the legislature. The request had not been that students be excused from classes, he clarified, but only that the University community be informed that the activities would occur and that individual instructors be given the chance to make arrangements with students. The President will be asked to write a letter to the community so that students and instructors

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know of the activities.

Rather than the President writing, it might be better for student government to write to department heads, noting the importance of the activity to the University. That would be more appropriate than any central administration involvement. Such a letter would likely be well-received, it was said. The motivation was to get faculty to agree with it, which is why students were reluctant to make it their own effort.

For any individual student, said one Committee member, it will come down to what they present to an instructor. An instructor presented with a proposal by a student taking an initiative to do something on behalf of the University would probably lead to applause, not difficulty, for the students. But the details of arranging it have to be individual. Many faculty are glad to see students do this, and the time is right. There are a lot of students here; if they were ever galvanized into a political force on behalf of the University, it would be a good thing.

The University Senate could pass a resolution saying it was good for students to be involved in the future of the University, and to be involved in state government. This is part of the educational process, and the faculty could support a resolution saying it was a good education, not one calling for time off for tests and so on.

Anyone who is a member of the University Senate, when asked by the chair about new business, could bring this up, Professor Adams pointed out. A resolution to publicize what is being done would be legitimate and would explain what is going on.

What about the faculty perception that students are a liability for the University, asked one Committee member? Whatever they plan, Professor Adams suggested, should be discussed with Vice President George to make sure that wires aren't being crossed. The students intend to be very responsible, the Committee was assured, but does there remain faculty perception that students have no business at the legislature because they undermine faculty interests? One Committee member, a former faculty lobbyist, said students are one of the University's greatest assets.

One Committee member cautioned that were a test occurring in her class that day, she would suggest that another student go lobby, not one in her class. Recall, it was said, that it is difficult to give a test and fit it around student work, vacation, child care, and other schedules--soon the test is administered for the entire week. This would be one more thing faculty would be asked to accommodate, and some may resist--and that's where resistance would come, not because the activity is inappropriate. If there were no test, that would be different.

There were times, said another Committee member, when students went not as advocates of the University but as advocates of low tuition. If that's the focus--hold down tuition--then students should not be surprised to find faculty opposed. The Governor called for holding tuition increases to 3% and for much greater reallocation than the University is prepared for. The administration is already trying to balance tuition increases with reallocation; for the Governor to ask that reallocation be more than doubled in order to hold down tuition will not lead faculty to support a request for low tuition. If the message is that the University and higher education need to remain a high priority for the state, including financial aid, then students would receive faculty support.

The major student groups, it was noted, are on record as supporting the partnership proposal and intend to stick to that, it was noted.

2. Resolutions from the Senate Committee on Educational Policy

Professor Adams drew the attention of Committee member to two motions from SCEP for placement on the docket of the University Senate meeting. One proposes changes in the Morse-Alumni award; the other creates joint preparation requirements for the University of Minnesota and the Minnesota State University System. He asked Professor Heller to briefly review the items.

Professor Heller explained the changes being proposed in the Morse-Alumni awards: increased recognition of the award winners, greater connection of the award with the University, and a change in the financial award from three years to lifetime (coterminous with service as a faculty member at the University). There was discussion about whether the increase in award should be added to the base salary or a continuing augmentation, as is the case with the Regents Professorships. The source of the funds would be the general salary pool. There would be no effect on the budget for at least three years, and after that it would be a \$15,000 reallocation from the salary budget (at the University level). The Committee discussed the merits and drawbacks of salary augmentation versus base salary increases.

The change would not be retroactive; the language will be changed so that only awardees beginning in 1995 would be covered by the change.

The proposed operational changes would not be acted on by the Senate, so could be modified as circumstances suggest.

Thought should be given, it was said, to an award for outstanding teaching at the graduate and professional level; some faculty teach primarily at that level, and are not eligible for this award. Such an award would be for quality, not quantity. Professor Adams suggested that Professor Heller bring this up with SCEP, inasmuch as this is a research university and one its major responsibilities is graduate education.

This also speaks to the focus of the Alumni Association, which appears to emphasize undergraduate education. What about graduate and professional alumni? There are separate alumni societies for graduate and professional schools that have representation on the Alumni Association Board of Directors. Since fund-raising would also perhaps be enhanced, and a capital campaign may take place in a few years, it is not too early to begin thinking about an expanded effort to reach graduate and professional alumni. Much of the money in the last capital campaign went for endowed chairs, many of which are in the professional schools. The focus of the next campaign could be on other activities.

The level at which the funds for the award will be provided must be identified. If provided centrally, that is one thing; if the departments must provide the \$1500 annual award, that is quite another. It should also be made clear whether the award should be a permanent augmentation or added to the base salary. SCEP discussed it a long time and came to no conclusion, Professor Heller reported. The Committee continued to discuss at length the relative advantages of an augmentation versus an addition to base salary.

One point made had to do with the relationship between salary and market. The market generally determines base salary, then the University rewards, with augmentations, other activities which it wishes to encourage. To blend them, in the base salary, may lead to neither desirable outcome; the incentive effects of the augmentation are muted, and the market effects are disturbed.

There appeared to be general agreement among Committee members that it would be preferable to have the award be a continuing augmentation. From SCEP's point of view, Professor Heller reported, the important principle is the continuing award; it can be left up to wiser political heads to eventually decide between an augmentation and an addition to base.

The Committee approved the Morse-Alumni changes for the Senate docket and turned to the changes in the high school preparation requirements. Professor Heller reported that the item includes much that has already been approved by the Senate and is currently in effect. The only changes are the addition of one year of geography, under social studies--which need not be a separate course--and one year of visual or performing arts. This recommendation represents the conclusion of long negotiations with the State University System.

SCEP had no problems with the recommendations, Professor Heller reported, and found the changes laudable. The only issue which raised questions is the language in the report calling for a change from a "seat time" requirement to a competency requirement. That proposal, however, is not in the recommendation and how it would be implemented is not clear.

It was noted that the adoption of these preparation standards had had a very powerful and beneficial effect on high schools. This is an important point, said another; in some cases, it may have led to reductions in offerings in some areas (e.g., math) in order to provide them in others (e.g., languages). Nonetheless, the standards have produced interesting results.

After brief additional discussion, the Committee approved the item for the Senate docket.

3. Approval of Dockets

Professor Adams reviewed the contents of the Senate docket.

There was brief discussion of the draft Academic Freedom and Responsibility statement. One Committee member wondered about the language "to speak and write as a citizen," since many members of the University community are not U.S. citizens, and "to perform faithfully the duties of membership in the University" without trying to define those duties.

The issue of citizenship, in the academic freedom provision, is interesting, said one Committee member. The U.S. Constitution protects people who are here, whether or not they are citizens. One can read it "as a citizen might" or "in the role of a citizen." It may be the wrong word. Professor Morrison will know how to fix it.

Whose freedom is being protected, asked one Committee member? In the previous discussion, it was recalled, it is the academic freedom of all members of the University community, with no distinction

between faculty and students and others.

What about the instance when an instructor needs to cut off a student in class? That falls under the "responsibilities" section of the statement. What if students don't like a method of teaching; does that mean the student doesn't have to do with work? The statement is mostly about the freedom of a faculty member, what is classically known as academic freedom--how a course is structured, how the subject matter is presented, and so on. If it is enlarged to the whole University community, there are problems.

There is language in the statement which calls on all members of the University community to foster the principles in it and how problems are resolved. If the procedure is that the professor is in charge of the classroom, when debate is cut off is up to the faculty member. Nor does this policy override other policies, such as those requiring students to complete coursework in order to graduate, nor could a faculty member decide not to give grades.

The Committee approved the Senate docket.

Professor Adams then called for approval of the Twin Cities Campus Assembly docket. It was approved without debate or dissent.

4. Discussion of the Work of the Assembly Committee on Intercollegiate Athletics

Professor Adams welcomed Professors Mary Lou Fellows and William Flanigan (chair and vice chair of the Assembly Committee on Intercollegiate Athletics [hereinafter ACIA]) to the meeting, and noted that one responsibility of this Committee is to keep track of what other Senate and Assembly committees are doing. Since there is interest in the changed rules about recruiting and academic performance in intercollegiate athletics, the Committee would like to hear ACIA's assessment on how it is doing in the conduct of academic audits of the teams as well as anything else they would like to mention.

Professor Fellows explained that the first priority of ACIA this year is to review how the faculty on ACIA has undertaken academic audits of athletic teams. Both she and Professor Flanigan have participated in audits, and made it a priority when she became chair, because it was clear that the efforts being put in by the faculty were not sufficiently productive. The system was broken enough that it needed to be fixed. Three things needed attention:

- Too much time was being spent on teams that had no academic problems.
- Whatever problems were discovered were not followed up.
- It was not possible to audit each team every year, so they were on a three-year schedule. ACIA ended up with a snapshot rather than a longitudinal picture, and in the meantime coaches and academic counselors change. ACIA had no sense of where systems work and where they break down.

Over the last year ACIA has been considering systemic versus individual issues, with regard to each team, each athletic department, and athletics generally, and is considering policy changes to be brought back to the Assembly. ACIA has NOT brought any final proposals forward, yet; this report is

intended to indicate that ACIA can do a better job of auditing and to invite comments about the problems.

Professor Fellows turned to Professor Flanigan for comments. The audit process was established about a decade ago, he began, after the incident in Madison, and called for regular annual audits of every team. ACIA learned that that was too burdensome, and the audit process was abandoned. There was also a procedure for emergency audits, if there was unusually unsatisfactory performance; a few such emergency audits were held. This process was also abandoned.

Two years ago, ACIA decided to begin doing audits on a three-year basis, and began with teams that had the worst academic records. This year, as a result, the audits would end up looking at teams that were doing well, which was not satisfactory. There is no compelling need to audit teams doing well, so the process was reconsidered, and a proposal is being developed to permit focus on the teams doing least well academically. There will be both regular audits and emergency audits, different in form, and different from the plan put in place originally. The intent is to make the process more focused, less intermittent, and one that accomplishes something.

What does an audit include, asked one Committee member? There are indicators of academic performance, based on GPAs; when they drop below a certain level, an audit is triggered. There are three criteria: the cumulative team GPA (using the Big Ten rules, which treats an Incomplete as an "F"); the quarterly team GPA, and the percentage of students below 2.0. Anyone of the three, falling below an established threshold, will trigger an audit.

The process calls for creation of a panel of faculty, who contact the coach and academic counselor and which can request information. They hold a meeting, before which they see individual records and summary statistics for the year, and for the other teams in the department. The meeting is with the coach and academic counselor; after it, they prepare a written report--which may be lost in the bureaucracy.

There is an academic counseling office for athletics, Professor Fellows told the Committee; it reports to the [Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs], provides a range of expertise, and assigns a counselor to each team. That office plays a significant role in the audit process, because ACIA relies on it to provide accurate academic information, including about specific students. The audit meeting thus brings counseling expertise to the issues at hand.

The audit process includes both the aggregation of information and data as well as deciding what will be done. While the academic counseling office did exist when the auditing process was originally designed, a revised process will make better use of the office and focus better on their activities.

Does the recommendation from the ACIA subcommittee mean that the results will produce better results and changes? Yes, Professor Flanigan said, although how that will happen is not clear. With a small team, a single student may have a bad quarter, and the focus will be on him or her. The focus has to get away from individual athletes, but there is no plan to get to systematic recommendations for a team or for athletics.

The target date for launching the new audit process is this spring, Professor Flanigan said.

Are there consequences for coaches whose teams are regularly audited? The coaches do not like to

appear before the audit panel, Professor Flanigan said, and the athletic directors take into account academic performance, although not just the audits. There are encouragements and rewards associated with improving team academic performance in both men's and women's athletics.

There is an enhancement program that has begun in recent years, Professor Fellows reported, whereby coaches identify students they believe to be "at risk." It provides support designed to ensure academic success. There is now the capacity to measure whether the program is successful, and it will be evaluated. The data will come from the Academic Counseling program? They will, Professor Flanigan responded, but they would prefer to have them be developed elsewhere, only because counselors have to spend time calculating GPAs by hand; the burden should be taken off that office. ACIA has a number of indicators that can be used, including better ones, but it is not appropriate to impose on the counseling office to provide the data.

Professor Fellows commented that the presence of ACIA, the quarterly and annual reports, and the fact that it does audits, has a substantial effect on priorities in the athletic departments. Whatever the choices about indicators, she said, there is no question that ACIA's presence makes a difference. Coaches and athletic directors know that they will have to answer for problems.

Not all of ACIA's activities appear to be mean-spirited, observed Professor Flanigan. One comment from inside the athletic program, when the audit program was interrupted, was that coaches whose teams are doing well welcomed the opportunity to come before the faculty. ACIA believes it should have some kind of recognition of coaches and athletes who are doing well; what is lacking is a measure of improvement or over-achievement--which is a touchy business. But recognition and rewards should be provided for some people.

What do other schools do, asked one Committee member, that Minnesota might take into account in redesigning its process? Is it the only one that does this? Professor Fellows said they do not know if there are audits elsewhere; they have learned that Minnesota has a unique academic counseling office. Unique that it exists, that it is as extensive as it is and the number of programs and counselors involved, the facilities it has. Other schools come to observe Minnesota as a model in academic counseling. So it's hard to use other schools' programs as a guide. One alternative model is to focus on the individual student; the focus here is on the team. There is a rationale for focusing on the team, coach, and counselor, but little is known about what goes on nationwide in terms of faculty oversight.

Does the audit process consider the team leadership, such as the coach and the counselor? Students on different teams, in orientation, act differently, largely because of the direction of the coach. The same is likely true of the approach to academics. Each team may be a different subculture, and some of it may be dependent on the assistant coaches as much as the head coach. Does ACIA watch this? This is something ACIA wants to become more aware of, Professor Flanigan said, although it may not have recommendations about it, and it has nothing in place to inform itself very well about these things. One idea would be to have the panel interview a representative set of athletes, when a team is in an audit. But there are great differences among teams, to be sure; it isn't clear ACIA could do much about it.

With this unusual advising system, how does its existence affect recruiting? Presumably it would be a plus for Minnesota, when it seeks students who have high athletic ability. That is talked about a great deal, Professor Fellows said; one of the balancing problems the counselors have is to deal with the

pressure from coaches to work with potential recruits and at the same time work with students who are here. But there is no question that many of the coaches and recruits care about the academic counseling program. There is no doubt it plays some role in recruiting. The counseling program is also used in recruiting, telling parents and students about the facilities available here.

There is also an exit interview of student-athletes. One of the things they are asked about is what was most important to them at the University; half mention academic counseling. It is very important to athletes and a very positive part of the athletic programs.

The Committee is primarily interested in the academic side of the programs, Professor Adams said, and asked if there were other things about the academic side that they wished to bring to the Committee's attention besides the audit process? Within the audit process, there has been a move to look at other educational issues, such as diversity and sexual orientation; ACIA wishes to see how the University is reflected in the athletic departments, and to understand that there are more commonalities with athletics than not.

Some of these issues come out through audits; others are dealt with by task forces and committees within athletics. One example is sexual violence; ACIA receives reports on such programs and considers them educational and academic, although they may not come through the audit process.

There has been discussion about increasing the number of faculty on ACIA to facilitate the audit process; is that still a concern? Professor Flanigan said it is, and they are considering drawing on faculty NOT on ACIA to make up the panels.

The athletic programs believe that student-athletes have many unique and difficult problems. But almost all of the things that come to the attention of ACIA are the same problems that face the rest of the students on the campus. If those are solved, the athletic problems will take care of themselves.

Professor Adams thanked Professors Fellows and Flanigan for joining the meeting, and adjourned the meeting at 2:30.

-- Gary Engstrand

University of Minnesota