

SOCIAL CONCERNS COMMITTEE  
MINUTES OF MEETING  
FEBRUARY 11, 2002

[In these minutes: Welcome, Approval of November 12 and December 10, 2001 Minutes, Proxy Resolution Voting and Assignment, Mount Graham Discussion]

[These minutes reflect discussion and debate at a meeting of a committee of the University of Minnesota Senate or Twin Cities 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: Robert Brown, Chair, Laura Hamilton, Karen Holtmeier, Yvonne Redmond-Brown, Jean Niemiec, Greg Schooler, Julie Sweitzer, George French, Margaret Kuchenreuther, Judi Linder, Mark Pedelty, Patrick Buckle, Kari Lindeman, Aimee Martin, Brian Wiedenmeier

REGRETS: Cameron Brauer

ABSENT: Catherine Forseide-Hussain, John Jensen, John Beatty, Luis Ramos-Garcia, Anne Decker, Andrew Pomroy

GUEST(S): Dwight Metzger, Cara Saunders, Michael Davis, Ola Cassadore Davis, Jim Anderson, Terry Lussier, Rosemary Fitster, Roxanne Gould, Leonard Kuhi

I). Professor Brown called the meeting to order, welcomed those present and asked members and guests to introduce themselves.

II). Committee members unanimously approved the November 12, 2001 and December 10, 2001 minutes.

III). The Social Concerns Committee is charged with voting proxy resolutions for all the stocks the University holds in its endowment portfolio. For the next meeting on March 11, 2002, members will be asked to volunteer to research a resolution, determine what is at stake in the resolution and bring back a general recommendation to the Committee on how to vote. As a resource tool, the Committee has access to information compiled by the ICCR, a clearinghouse of religious, socially minded and watchdog type groups that researches each resolution. The information collected by the ICCR provides the Committee with a sense of how a particular resolution should be voted.

The Committee has taken the position that by voting for or against resolutions, regardless of whether resolutions have even the slightest chance of passing, the University has at least taken a stand on the issues.

Professor Brown gave a brief synopsis of each of the four resolutions before the Committee to be voted on today, February 11, 2002. Professor Brown and Greg Schooler

of Asset Management recommended approval of all four resolutions and the Committee unanimously voted approval.

As in previous years, Committee members were assigned to research various resolutions to be voted on at the March 11, 2002 meeting. The following Committee members volunteered to research these upcoming resolutions:

Citigroup, Inc.	Affirm Political Nonpartisanship	Brian Wiedenmeier
	Adopt Policy Against Money Laundering	B. Wiedenmeier
	Link Executive Pay to Social Criteria	B. Wiedenmeier
	Review Financial Ventures' Impact on Climate	M. Kuchenreuther
	Review Social Criteria in Financial Ventures	Robin Brown
General Electric	Ensure Political Balance in News Programs	Mark Pedelty???
	Stop Stereotypes of Polish-Americans	Robin Brown
	Implement ILO Standards	Patrick Buckle
	Report on Greenhouse Gas Emissions	M. Kuchenreuther
	Report on Nuclear Power	Robin Brown
	Disclose Costs of PCB Cleanup Delay	M. Kuchenreuther
	Fire Tom Brokaw	Mark Pedelty
IBM	Consider Supporting National Health Care	Karen Holtmeier
Johnson & Johnson	Endorse CERES Principles	Greg Schooler
	Adopt Drug Price Restraint Policy	Kari Lindeman
MBNA	Report on EEO & Plans Against "Glass Ceiling"	Jean Niemiec
Pfizer Inc.	Make AIDS Drugs Affordable in Poor Countries	Kari Lindeman
Sprint Corp.	Report on Greenhouse Gas Emissions	M. Kuchenreuther
	Report on Recycled Paper Feasibility	M. Kuchenreuther

IV). The question to be discussed by the Committee today is should the University continue to affiliate itself with the large binocular telescope project on Mount Graham? Professor Brown laid the framework for Committee members by outlining the two schools of thought as it relates to this issue:

1. The University of Minnesota is a research University where research is absolutely significant. What is the loss to science if the University does not participate in the project?
2. The University of Minnesota is a land grant institution that has been implicated in oppression of native peoples i.e. wild rice research etc. The University needs to make sure that it does not do this type of thing again.

In dealing with this issue, Professor Brown indicated that the Committee can:

1. Present a resolution to the Senate that asks the faculty to take a position.
2. The Committee can write directly to President Yudof and express its feelings and position on the issue.

Regardless of which avenue the Committee decides to take it has a responsibility to look at all relevant information fairly and objectively.

Professor Brown opened the floor to discussion on the Mount Graham issue soliciting input from Committee members and guests. Questions and comments raised by members and guests included:

- Is there any other feasible site for the telescope? From a scientific perspective the Mount Graham site is the best location for the large binocular telescope access. The building is already built, the lenses are being ground and the telescope is in place thus allowing the most immediate and easy access for the University.
- There are other forms of value that can be associated to Mount Graham besides astronomical science and financial value. The types of sciences that should be studied on Mount Graham are ecological in nature.
- There is a plan to build four more telescopes on Mount Graham.
- If the University of Minnesota participates in the large binocular telescope project it will fuel the University of Arizona's efforts to continue to actively and willfully desecrate the mountain.
- Professor Brown commented that there is one matter before the Committee and that is whether the University is buying time on the binocular telescope or whether the University is allowing further changes to the mountain.
- If the University does not become involved in the Mount Graham project will there be other opportunities? Technically yes, however, the \$5 million that the University has to spend will not go far in the new generation international telescope projects that are currently being considered in Chile and Hawaii. Besides the cost factor, these projects are probably 15-20 years in the making. Professor Kuhl firmly believes that the Mount Graham project offers the University of Minnesota a unique astronomical opportunity.
- The Committee as a whole believes that the information on the issue is internally contradictory and this makes fact finding very difficult. While the Committee has not established criteria or standards for making a decision with respect to this issue, Professor Brown recommended that the Committee take in as much information as possible and weigh it as carefully as possible. The information that the Committee is evaluating, unfortunately, is incommensurate.
- Representatives on both sides of the issue argued that inaccurate and misleading information has been presented concerning the Mount Graham project.
- Passionate testimony was heard from Ola Cassadore Davis, a member of the San Carlos Apache tribe in Arizona, concerning her strong opposition to the Mount Graham large binocular telescope project and the oppression indigenous peoples

have suffered at the hands of the white man over the years. According to Ms. Davis Mount Graham is a sacred mountain and the University of Arizona, through its actions, has killed the Apache's culture. Ms. Davis wishes that non-indigenous peoples could understand the Apache's point of view on this issue. Ms. Davis pleaded with Committee members to abide by the laws of the United States and protect a sacred site.

- Michael Davis, a Mount Graham Coalition Representative, expounded on Ola Davis' emotional testimony and point blank asked members how long will indigenous peoples' religious ceremonies and freedom continue to be interfered with?
- For the record, an American Indian Movement representative quoted Charles Kraut, a University of Virginia anthropologist by reading an excerpt from a position paper on the Mount Graham issue which stated, "In my opinion, no University or institution should give the University of Arizona money to complete the highly questionable project. Numerous other astronomers at prestigious schools and scientific institutions from coast to coast have rejected the site. Now other institutions contemplating becoming part of the project should do the same. They can be ethically courageous and stand-up to the rights of the Apache...No one should be responsible, even in part, for contributing to the continuing disruption of another persons deep religious believes."

The American Indian representative went on to point out that throughout history changes have always been imposed on native people by force rather than addressing and discussing issues of contention.

- A member stated that while the Committee does not have the power to decide if the University should ultimately go ahead with this project or not, the Committee's role is to be the social conscience of the University and should therefore take a stand on the issue. On the other hand, another member felt strongly that the Committee does not have enough information to take a position either way.
- A suggestion was proposed requiring the University to solicit input from affected groups before moving forward on projects that have implications for native people, environmental considerations, etc.
- Professor Kuchenreuther updated members on her findings concerning the Mount Graham red squirrels. Unfortunately, because the Fish and Wildlife and the National Park Service websites were down since December limited information was accessible to her prior to today's meeting. Professor Kuchenreuther's investigation found conflicting information concerning the telescope's affects on the red squirrels as well as the overall status of the squirrels. According to Professor Kuchenreuther, whether the University buys into the telescope project or not the damage has already been done i.e. the forest is fragmented, there is a road and cement paths etc. Professor Kuchenreuther is incensed, however, that so many of the environmental safeguards that are supposed to keep projects like this from moving forward without regard to ecological protection were circumvented by riders on legislation.

To conclude, Professor Brown proposed that he, on behalf of the Committee, would draft a resolution outlining the testimony that the Committee has heard to incorporate the following:

- There are important scientific implications at stake with regard to the Mount Graham telescope project.
- The Mount Graham large binocular telescope project is a unique opportunity for the University.
- The large binocular telescope on Mount Graham is situated on sacred and symbolic ground. To participate in this project significantly positions the University with regard to native rights and this has implications.

The draft resolution will be distributed to the Committee via e-mail for review and input and will be discussed at the March 11, 2002 meeting.

Professor Brown summarized that the Committee's job, as social conscience to the University, is to advise its colleagues of the consequences of its actions or inactions by virtue of what the Committee has heard. Ultimately, the Committee cannot readdress racism or make the University do anything. Rather, it is the Committee's role is to provide the administration and the University community as a whole with good science, good anthropology, good spiritual thought and a good sense of the politics involved with respect to this issue.

V). With no further business, Professor Brown adjourned the meeting.

Renee Dempsey  
University Senate