

SENATE COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL CONCERNS
MINUTES OF MEETING
OCTOBER 7, 2002

[In these minutes: Welcome and Introductions, Committee Charge Overview, Future Agenda Item Ideas]

[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: Mark Pedelty, chair, Jennifer Oliphant, Ruth Taylor, Roger Beck, Sheri Huerd, Greg Schooler, Susan Craddock, Jeffrey Crump, Kenneth Heller, Margaret Kuchenreuther, Ben Senauer

REGRETS: Yvonne Redmond-Brown, Albert Cooper, Julie Sweitzer

ABSENT: Judi Linder, Karen Holtmeier, Susan Von Bank,, H. Jeanie Taylor, Joel Helfrich

I). Professor Pedelty called the meeting to order and asked those present to introduce themselves.

II). Professor Pedelty read aloud the committee's charge and outlined the three main issues the committee dealt with last year:

1. Fair Trade Coffee
2. Worker's Rights Consortium
3. Mount Graham

Next, members brainstormed on issues they would like to deal with in 2002 – 2003. Ideas that were brought forward included:

- Energy conservation at the University of Minnesota. What provisions are made when new buildings are constructed to ensure they are energy efficient? Does Fleet Services have a reasonable suite of fuel-efficient vehicles, etc.? Professor Kuchenreuther and Professor Senauer volunteered to spearhead this issue. Alumni member Roger Beck also expressed an interest in this issue and will do whatever he can in light of his busy work schedule.
- K-12 links with the University. What can the University do to enhance its relationship with K-12? To what extent does/should the University support the metro K-12 education system? What can the University do in terms of outreach with K-12? This is a very broad issue and, to an extent, lacks specificity. Professor Heller suggested that this committee could focus its efforts on raising the University's presence in the K-12 system and have the University be more

- connected with that part of our social environment. Similarly look into how University student's tuition dollars are being spent. Are they getting what they pay for?
- Look into the University's licensing agreements with pharmaceutical companies as it relates to getting essential medicines out to the most needy. The most needy are being denied these drugs because of the University's licensing agreements. Amend the University's Intellectual Property Policy to include an ethics clause regarding essential medicines. The committee agreed to invite Greta Bauer, PhD student in the School of Public Health to outline the issue and provide members with more information on the topic.
 - Chemical use by the University of Minnesota for landscaping purposes. What policy, if any, does the University have regarding the use of landscaping chemicals? Professor Pedelty agreed to take the lead on this issue.
 - Review the status of Mitsubishi Motors Corporation. In 1996, the Social Concerns Committee recommended that the University refrain from purchasing Mitsubishi products because the company's manufacturing processes were contributing to the destruction of rainforests.
 - Should the committee continue looking into the Mount Graham issue? Members went back and forth on whether or not to spend more time on this issue. In the end, the committee decided to table the issue at least for now.
 - Look into the feasibility and ability of the University's food service to purchase food from local farmers rather than institutional vendors. This would be a way to help the greater Minnesota farming community as part of the University's mission as a land grant institution. The University should have a responsibility to educate people about food and where it comes from. Sheri Huerd agreed to take the lead on this issue.
 - Focus the University's attention on the need for more childcare facilities on campus.
 - The committee will need to vote on proxy resolutions next semester.
 - Look at and list internal social concerns at the University.

Based on the ideas generated from this discussion, the committee has plenty of agenda items to look into. Members were encouraged to contact Professor Pedelty or Renee Dempsey if they have additional ideas or need to reserve time on an upcoming agenda if they are spearheading an issue.

III). Hearing no further business, Professor Pedelty adjourned the meeting.

Renee Dempsey
University Senate