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MINUTES

SENATE COMMITTEE ON FACULTY AFFAIRS

Thursday, February 27, 1997
 238 Morrill Hall, Regents Room
 3:00 - 5:00 p.m.

[These minutes reflect discussion and debate at 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: Daniel Feeney (chair), Josef Altholz, Gary Balas, Carol Carrier, Carol Chomsky, Robert Fahnhorst, Judith Gaston, Richard Goldstein, Rolland Guyotte, Carol Miller, Richard Purple

Regrets: Mary Dempsey, Richard McGehee, Samuel Myers, Anne Pick, Naomi Scheman, Bernard Selzler

Absent: Cheryl Coryea, Kevin O'Laughlin

Guests: n/a

Others: n/a

[Included in these minutes are reports from the Faculty Benefits Subcommittee and the Retirement Benefits Subcommittee. In addition were discussions of the role of faculty governance, faculty indemnification, as well as faculty payroll in light of the change to semesters.]

1. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

All present committee members approved the agenda.

2. CHAIRUS REPORT

Professor Daniel Feeney explained that Professor Fred Morrison (and the Committee of Eight) provided the Board of Regents an interpretation of the proposed amendments to the Sullivan II tenure code. In this paper, Professor Morrison explained which items of the code were controversial, and those that were not.

President-Elect Mark Yudof responded to a letter from faculty governance. He has stated that he would be pleased to meet with the faculty leaders. Any faculty would be welcome to this meeting which would include discussion on consultation at the University, and other topics of interest.

Academic Misconduct: Some small remodeling changes are underway regarding this policy. FCC was faxed a policy earlier in the day. This would be brought before SCFA at its next meeting.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The January 9, 1997 minutes were approved without dissent.

4. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Faculty Benefits Subcommittee

Ms. Judith Gaston said that she had met with chairs of the Academic Staff Advisory Committee and the Civil Service Committees. All three groups are interested in developing a cafeteria style benefits plan. During the winter quarter, this group met with Professor John Fossum (Industrial Relations) to glean an historical and future perspective of this type of benefits program. Ms. Gaston will be drafting a letter from all three of these groups to Assoc. V.P. Carol Carrier and President Hasselmo, encouraging further exploration of the cafeteria benefits plan. This letter will provide a some of the material collected by Ms. Gaston and the other chairs. This group has not determined whether the University should consider leaving the state medical insurance program.

Mr. Robert Fahnhorst proceeded to discuss the latest updates on the discount program for the University. The program was formerly operated through the University Hospital. This program is still operating, but will be discontinued in the near future given the purchase of the University Hospital by Fairview-Riverside Medical Center. University Human Resource is exploring the development of such a program for the University. The Student Unions are interested in assuming responsibility for this program to encourage increased traffic in their areas. Discount RcentersS would operate on the East Bank, West Bank, and St. Paul areas of the campus to arrange discounts for local and national service providers, and to distribute discounted tickets to events and performances (not including reserved seating performances). These centers would possibly provide service 12 hours per day, Monday through Saturday. Part of this program would include advertisement in print and on the Rweb.S University students and employees would have access to this service. Mr. Fahnhorst added that there is a significant amount of interest in retaining the discount services at a number of day-care facilities.

B. Retirement Subcommittee

Professor Richard Goldstein read the charge to the subcommittee to SCFA and listed some brief interpretations. This academic year the subcommittee has been reviewing the performance of the most popular investment options for retirement accounts, as well as the benefits available to those faculty who retired before 1963. For the remainder of the year, the subcommittee will be discussing the performance of the retirement program options, Professor Goldstein also said that he is the sole faculty member serving on the search committee to find a replacement for the retired Assoc. V.P. Roger Paschke.

As the committee continued to discuss this matter, they discussed that different provostal areas may be interested in developing unique retirement incentive initiatives. Last year, the subcommittee spoke out against this proposal. One SCFA member noted that the academic employees of the P&A category are need to wait three years to access the retirement benefits, whereas the professional employees and tenure(tracked) faculty relationship only need to wait two years. However, depending on the salary, some P&A personnel have no waiting period, whereas a tenure track faculty member in an assistant professor role may have to wait two years.

5. DISCUSSION ON THE ROLE OF FACULTY GOVERNANCE IN TODAYUS UNIVERSITY

Based on previous discussion within SCFA, Professor Feeney said that there appears to be some faculty dissatisfaction with the current governance system. One committee member said that the governance system has not been seriously reviewed in over 10 years. Additional comments include:

- * The selection to FCC may need some improvements. It might be beneficial to list the interests of prospective members rather than just the committees on which they have served.
- * There is a need for more junior faculty in the governance process.
- * The committee requested copies of the Big 10 Governance Survey conducted during 1995-96.

6. FACULTY INDEMNIFICATION

Professor Feeney opened the discussion for the committee and summarized some relevant material. The committee reviewed a number of items to help continued discussion on this issue:

- * What are some examples of how the University has applied the policy and those cases where faculty were not defended?
- * There are three different types of cases:
 - The are those were the faculty member is sued and the university defends this person.
 - The university is sued for actions of a faculty member.
 - A faculty member is commanded by a court to turn over all the material related to a particular research project.
- * The University could look into providing an insurance policy for faculty indemnification.

Committee members agreed to help collect some of the information listed above to direct the next discussion on indemnification.

7. FACULTY PAYROLL CHANGES

Professor Goldstein explained that SCFA is responsible to determine when the pay period of faculty should begin and end based on the upcoming change to semesters. Based on the number of weeks for the semester, there is an inconsistent schedule for the length of summer breaks. This is particularly problematic when dealing with funding agencies who are interested in providing equal amounts of grant resources for special summer projects. The committee noted that SCFA could choose a fixed starting date for faculty. The committee also discussed the complexity of this issue due to bi-weekly payroll. Assoc. V.P. Carrier and Professor Goldstein agreed to review this subject in preparation for the April 3 SCFA meeting.

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