

CLASSROOM ADVISORY SUBCOMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MEETING
MARCH 21, 2005

[In these minutes: Status of Classroom Funding Proposals and Requests, Departmental Classroom Space Utilization, President's Emerging Leaders Discussion (off the record)]

[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: Joel Weinsheimer, chair, Steve Fitzgerald, Michael Fox, Bernard Gulachek, Steve Spehn, Joyce Weinsheimer, John S. Anderson, Donald Brazeal, Denise Guerin, Ken Heller, Andre Pahl, Meghan Jensen, Jamie Larson

REGRETS: Roberta Juarez, David Dierauer

ABSENT: Hassan Abdi, James Perry

GUESTS: Anne Kranz, Program Director School of Social Work (President's Emerging Leaders Program) and Julie Selander, Senior Associate Director of One Stop Student Services (President's Emerging Leaders Program)

I). Professor Weinsheimer called the meeting to order and asked those present to introduce themselves. He went on to explain that in the first part of today's meeting normal business would be conducted and then the meeting would be officially adjourned and turned over to today's guests, Anne Kranz and Julie Selander, from the President's Emerging Leaders Program to discuss classrooms and optimum space utilization.

II). Mr. Fitzgerald, with the assistance of a PowerPoint presentation, provided members with an overview of the Office of Classroom Management (OCM) and information on the financial issues impacting classrooms at the University. He highlighted the following:

- OCM was established, in part, because classrooms were not meeting faculty needs. This included an urgent need for classroom technology.
- There are roughly 300 general-purpose classrooms with 21,000 seats in 54 buildings across the University.
- Approximately \$65 million worth of tuition dollars flows through these classrooms each semester.
- Central classrooms are considered a common good.
- Central classrooms are an income generating resource for the University.
- OCM, over the years, has undertaken several initiatives to improve faculty and student support in classrooms.
- The Technology Upgrade Plan was created to solve the serious shortage of technology enhanced central classrooms.

- The Technology Upgrade Plan has been successful. As of spring 2005, 76% of central classrooms meet the Projection Capable Classroom Standard.
- From the onset, the Technology Upgrade Plan included all lifecycle costs. This includes maintenance costs, an annual set-aside for system replacement as well as staffing for faculty support. The identification of total cost funding at the front end of a project was an atypical approach for the University.
- Despite funding shortages, OCM was directed to improve classrooms as rapidly as possible primarily using one-time funds. OCM was assured that recurring funding dollars would be provided as replacements became due.
- Technology Upgrade Plan challenges:
 - Due to insufficient funding, the project is behind schedule. The project had been slated for completion at the end of FY04.
 - There is a lack of recurring funding for lifecycle maintenance, equipment replacement and support. OCM continues to work with the Provost's Office to establish an adequate recurring funding source.
- Faculty have a vested interest in retaining/maintaining classroom technology and have expressed concern over its sustainability. In response to these concerns, the University has acknowledged classroom technology is finite and has committed to its replacement at the end of its service life. OCM in conjunction with the Provost's Office has developed a comprehensive lifecycle cost model to address these funding requirements.
- In FY03 and FY04, OCM received one-time funds to help bridge the lagging recurring funding gap. OCM has requested additional one-time bridge funding for FY05 from the Provost's Office to prevent rooms from going dark.
- SCEP, SCFP and CAS have all voiced support for a stable, recurring funding mechanism to sustain classroom technology. If indeed classrooms are a valuable tuition generating resource, OCM should not be funded on the edge. Instead, a stable, recurring funding mechanism must be put in place in order to keep technology in classrooms.
- There is a proposal pending before the Provost with various options for resolving the Technology Upgrade Plan's funding issues.

Questions/comments from members:

- Can the delay in finding out whether OCM will receive one-time bridge funding for FY05 be attributed to the strategic planning process? Mr. Fitzgerald stated that the strategic planning focus might actually help solve the structural recurring funding problem. He did acknowledge that the intense focus on long-term planning might contribute to the delay in resolving the current short-term FY 05 bridge funding question.
- In terms of what is meant by "rooms going dark", does this specifically refer to projectors? It is the projectors and some portions of the control system that need to be reprogrammed when the projectors are replaced.
- Are projectors replaced rather than repaired? Yes, because the technology changes so fast and because of the cost. For example, a projector bulb can easily cost \$500. In the industry, many of these projectors are considered disposable systems at the end-of-service life.

- Professor Weinsheimer and Mr. Fitzgerald will report to SCEP in late April on classroom issues.
- The issue of recurring funding for the Technology Upgrade Plan (and for central classrooms in general) has been an on-going problem since this committee's inception. The fundamental problem has never been dealt with by the administration.

Hearing no further questions/comments on this agenda item, members turned their attention to the next item on the agenda, utilization of departmental classrooms.

III). By way of introduction to this agenda item, Professor Weinsheimer noted that it is critical that departmental classrooms serve the needs of the departments to which they are assigned and to students in general.

Mr. Fitzgerald reported there are about 243 departmental classrooms. Characteristics of departmental classrooms include:

- Designed to be narrower in their pedagogical focus.
- Meet the specific needs of a given department or program.
- Typically, but not always, smaller than general-purpose classrooms.

Mr. Fitzgerald noted that with the confluence of a lack of utilization information related to departmental classroom space as well as scheduling system and PeopleSoft enhancements, OCM is now able to make Resource 25 (R25) available to all departments. R25 is being voluntarily rolled out to departments, however, there may come a point in time when departments will be required to use R25. OCM is working hard to provide departments with information regarding the value of R25. There is a great deal of functionality and benefit to departments that choose to use R25. All departments, irrespective of whether they have chosen to use R25, are in the system. Currently, without the departmental R25 capability, the shortcoming in the system is that it only shows the course information that is in PeopleSoft. With Departmental R25, additional information on event scheduling in departmental classrooms is captured from departments allowing one to fully understand the utilization of departmental classroom space.

Professor Weinsheimer asked whether departmental conference rooms are included under departmental classroom space. Mr. Fitzgerald explained that OCM is focusing on departmental classroom space, but if departments choose to add other types of space in the system this is fine too.

A member asked who has access to R25? Mr. Fitzgerald noted that there are two levels of access to the information in the system:

1. Public view access of general scheduling information, which is on the web and anyone can view it.
2. Administrator access, assigned to designated staff within departments, gives more complete access to a greater range of data. These designated administrators can

do scheduling on the system for their departmental classrooms. This access is password protected.

In response to a student member's comment, Mr. Fitzgerald reported that registered student groups can view the public access central room scheduling website to determine which rooms are available and submit an on-line request for a room reservation. Two identified officers in each registered student group have the authority to submit scheduling requests.

A member asked whether some departments might be hesitant to not use the system and/or put all the information on the system because low utilization of space may infer a department has space that they are not utilizing, and, therefore, not need. Mr. Fitzgerald noted that this can sometimes be a concern at the scheduler or department administrator level; however, associate deans and higher are interested in making sure space is being appropriately used because space costs money.

In closing Mr. Fitzgerald noted that OCM believes that 100% transparency of central classroom space is good and it is likely transparency in terms of other types of space at the University would be good too.

IV). Professor Weinsheimer officially adjourned the meeting. The remaining meeting time was turned over to Anne Kranz from the President's Emerging Leaders Program. Ms. Kranz and Ms. Selander requested time to meet with members to engage them in a "focus group" discussion around classrooms and space optimization.

Renee Dempsey
University Senate