

Minutes*

Assembly Steering Committee
Thursday, May 6, 1993
12:30 - 1:30
Room 238 Morrill Hall

Present: Mario Bognanno (chair), David Dahlgren, Amos Deinard, Geoffrey Maruyama, Toni McNaron, Irwin Rubenstein, Anne Sales, Tess Sheir, Denise Tolbert, James Tracy, Shirley Zimmerman

Regrets: John Adams, Judith Garrard, Robert Jones, Karen Seashore Louis

Absent: Benjamin Liu

Guests: Margaret Carlson (Alumni Association), Vickie Roberts (Civil Service staff member, Assembly Committee on Intercollegiate Athletics), Robert Serfass (Vice chair, member, Assembly Committee on Intercollegiate Athletics), Burton Shapiro (Chair, ad hoc committee on intercollegiate athletics), Pam Wilson (Chair, Civil Service Committee)

Others: Paul Holm, Harvey Peterson, James VanAlstine

[In these minutes: membership on the Assembly Committee on Intercollegiate Athletics; allocation of the five student seats on the Assembly Steering Committee]

1. Membership on the Assembly Committee on Intercollegiate Athletics (ACIA)

Professor Bognanno convened the meeting at 12:45 and welcomed the several guests that had been invited. He reviewed the discussions about the membership on ACIA that had occurred at two previous Steering Committee meetings and the two different proposals before the Committee (the ad hoc committee on athletics' proposal and the ACIA counter-proposal). This meeting will focus only on membership on ACIA; the other recommendations of the ad hoc committee will be dealt with later this spring.

The ad hoc committee recommendation is that ACIA be composed of 9 faculty and 3 students, that P&A, alumni and civil service members be dropped, and that the two Big Ten/NCAA faculty representatives have ex-officio but non-voting status on ACIA. The ACIA proposal is to retain the P&A, civil service and alumni members, to add three faculty members, and that the faculty representatives retain their voting status. The purpose of this meeting is to hear from the alumni and civil service representatives about their role on ACIA and then, if possible, to vote on a bylaw revision.

Professor Serfass then explained that ACIA believes the civil service and alumni representatives

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should be retained, with voting status, and noted the broad constituencies and visible role that athletics plays on the campus. This role calls for a diverse ACIA membership. He also noted the approval of the NCAA representatives for the diversity of ACIA membership. The alumni and civil service members also do a great deal of work on ACIA and play an important role in the performance of ACIA duties. The addition of three faculty will help in the conduct of academic audits of the teams.

Dr. Carlson then explained the role of the Alumni Association and its view of itself as partners with the faculty in the academic enterprise. She noted the several ways in which the Association has worked to further academic objectives and the issues it is working on. They are ACADEMIC partners to the University, which is the only kind of partner they want to be. Dr. Carlson said that in her work with committees, if there are problems deeper than they appear, there is a tendency to restructure and change the composition of the committee. If, however, the charge and reporting structure of a committee can be articulated, the problems can be dealt with. Community-building at the University appears to be taking hold, she concluded, and the alumni only ask that they be permitted to be at the table.

Ms. Roberts told the Committee that good decision-making requires contributions from all the stakeholders; it is not true, she said, that civil service representatives reduce the ability of the faculty to make decisions on ACIA. The faculty perform the academic audits, but the other groups on ACIA provide insight into such matters as NCAA legislation, scheduling, searches for and evaluation of administrators, and other ACIA policies. Civil service employees often have years of experience, understand the institution's culture and its goals, and they see students and their problems every day and bring a great deal of knowledge to ACIA--just as faculty bring experience with the classroom.

Professor Shapiro then offered comments about the ad hoc committee's recommendation:

- The ad hoc committee had no agenda when it started; it only asked what the problems were, given that the Assembly apparently had no confidence in the oversight of athletics as exercised by ACIA.
- The primary issue is that the dynamics of ACIA were different from that of individuals; the ad hoc committee received individual comments very different from what ACIA has said.
- The environment of FCC would be very different if several vice presidents served on it as voting members; with these additional people and athletic representatives on ACIA, it does not function as a faculty oversight body.
- One past chair argued that the faculty representatives will always vote to support athletics when the athletic directors are present; another past chair said the ad hoc committee was absolutely correct but that nothing would happen.
- The academic audits are not up to date, and the student-athlete graduation rate at Minnesota is last in the Big Ten.
- ACIA does not have a broader charge than FCC, but by the logic being advanced, there should also be alumni, civil service, and presidential representatives on it as well as on ACIA.

ACIA is made up of good, sincere people, and it is understandable that constituents wish to be represented; the ad hoc committee report is not intended to criticize anyone on ACIA--but it does not function as it should.

One Committee member recalled again a meeting with the NCAA representatives, and the sense taken from the meeting that something needed fixing. The ad hoc committee report reinforced that feeling. Faculty should be added to ACIA. The faculty representatives, it seems, have an advocacy role with respect to athletics, and in that case, there is a conflict between the advocacy and oversight roles--so the faculty representatives should be ex-officio and non-voting. The other recommendation of the ad hoc committee report is troubling; once it is agreed there should be students (in addition to faculty), then it may be illogical to not allow other representatives.

There are precedents for alumni service on committees, the Committee member noted (as did Dr. Carlson), and for student representatives on such bodies as curriculum committees. If there are to be 9 faculty on ACIA, and if the faculty representatives were not to vote, then there would be a clear preponderance of faculty votes. One can draw the impression from the ad hoc committee report, it was said, of faculty timidity in defending academic values (a phenomenon not limited to ACIA, it was added).

The problem at hand may be more in the choice of people than in the structure, but one can readily support the proposal to add three faculty members and remove the voting power of the faculty representatives.

Professor Serfass affirmed that the faculty representatives are currently counted as part of the faculty complement on ACIA (6 faculty plus the two faculty representatives making up 8 of the 14 voting ACIA members). He said, however, that he did not see the faculty representatives as advocates--and if they are, then individuals who are NOT advocates should be appointed. He also confirmed that the faculty representatives are not used in the academic audit process, so that removing their voting status will not affect the workload of ACIA. The faculty representatives, he explained, help ACIA to understand how the NCAA functions--which is a very complicated matter--and with the compliance officer, they make important contributions to ACIA. The faculty representatives, he also told the Committee, vote the way that ACIA directs them to at Big Ten and NCAA meetings--and this has meant that they vote alone because Minnesota disagrees with positions taken by other institutions.

If ACIA is given a clear charge, provided with good people, and has a clear reporting and communication responsibility, Professor Serfass said, the committee will get its job done. There is too much work to do at present, so the addition of three faculty will be very helpful. What has been skirted in the discussion is the need for a mechanism to identify problems, the charge to ACIA, and the relationship between ACIA, SCEP, and the President. If ACIA is not attending to its charge, put people on it who will, rather than making structural changes.

One Committee member expressed concern that ACIA is also resisting other recommendations from the ad hoc committee, such as oversight of the budget and involvement in drafting of compliance reports. These appear to be part of the meat of an oversight body--if it has no role in these issues, it has no authority. Professor Serfass said ACIA receives all the compliance reports, and the compliance officer, who has had experience at other institutions, says that ACIA is more involved than any place he has seen. In terms of budget, the agenda of ACIA must be considered; there is professional oversight of

the budget in the administration. It is the sense of ACIA that those with financial expertise should review budgets and it should attend to other issues. There is also the risk of micromanagement when one gets involved in budgets.

Dr. Carlson observed that she runs a department, and is hired to do so without monthly oversight of the budget. One needs perhaps quarterly review, but constant oversight makes a manager impotent. If the manager is not doing the job, he or she should be fired, but should not be subject to micromanagement. Ms. Roberts noted that ACIA could get into things such as ticket sales, but that is not its job--its responsibilities are ACADEMIC oversight.

The ad hoc committee report, noted the Committee member who raised the question, only calls for annual review and oversight, not day-to-day management; the opposition to this role is not understandable. ACIA can obtain a sense of the broad priorities by budget review. Dr. Carlson concurred that such a role was not inappropriate. Professor Serfass noted that ACIA has a charge that permits it oversight of all aspects of athletics, and that perhaps it could focus on this element of the athletic programs more than it has.

At the request of another Committee member, the methods of appointment of the alumni and civil service representatives to ACIA were reviewed. In terms of faculty appointments, the recommendation of the ad hoc committee that ACIA members be appointed by the Steering Committee, rather than the Committee on Committees, was noted. The Steering Committee made ACIA appointments before 1987, then passed the responsibility to the Committee on Committees; the Steering Committee found it had too much to do. The problem the Committee on Committees has faced, Professor Maruyama reported (he is the current chair of the Committee on Committees) is trying to balance gender, broad University representation, and interest in and involvement with athletics. There is MUCH faculty interest in serving on ACIA, he noted.

Asked if the faculty could properly carry out their stewardship role with respect to academic matters on ACIA, Professor Serfass said he believed they could. There is no problem, on a day-to-day basis, in dealing with academic matters. The ad hoc committee is correct, he said, in asserting that there will always be problems in athletics; what is needed is a small group to identify and bring them to ACIA so that it can help solve them and bring them to the athletic directors. This is a matter of communication, not structure, he repeated.

Asked if the ACIA voting members ever met alone, without the ex-officio members, Professor Serfass said it had not, to his knowledge. It might be a good idea to do so, and would be helped if three faculty were added to ACIA. The issue of the impact of the ex-officio members should be openly discussed, Dr. Carlson urged, in order to avoid subterfuges and struggles to deal with it.

Asked if ACIA would have trouble with a motion to add three faculty and to remove the voting power of the faculty representatives, Professor Serfass responded that ACIA serves at the pleasure of the Assembly and it can do as it wishes. ACIA would be disappointed, because it is confident about giving them a vote, but ACIA will clearly do as the Steering Committee and Assembly wish.

Votes were then taken on motions to amend the ACIA report (to add three faculty but to remove the faculty representative voting power) and on the ad hoc committee report. All but two Committee

members voted in favor of so amending the ACIA report; all but two Committee members then voted in favor of placing the amended motion on the May 20 docket of the Assembly. In a separate vote on the ad hoc committee recommendation, there were two votes in favor, six opposed, and one abstention.

Professor Bognanno reminded the Committee that the vote taken today dealt ONLY with the ad hoc committee recommendation about ACIA membership; the remainder of its recommendations will be taken up later.

2. Allocation of Student Seats on the Assembly Steering Committee

Ms. Tolbert explained that the proposal before the Steering Committee is to formalize the current practice of alternating the number of graduate/professional and undergraduate students on the Steering Committee. That membership is based on enrollment, and because of the ratio to graduate/professional and undergraduate students, the ratio between the two groups on the Steering Committee for the past three years has been 3:2, 4:1, and 3:2. The student members of the Steering Committee proposed to extend that rotation for the next five year period; it was recognized that if a task force on governance were to recommend changes in committee representation, this proposal would perhaps be modified.

The reason for this proposal, explained one of the student members, is to eliminate the need for the Steering Committee to vote on the matter each year. This proposal, if approved, will eliminate it as an issue between the undergraduates and graduate/professional students.

On vote taken the Committee unanimously approved the proposal for the docket of the May 20 Assembly meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:30.

-- Gary Engstrand