

[In these minutes: Approval of Student Behavior Hearing Procedures, Student Fees Task Force update, U-Pass, CMU update]

STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE (SCSA)

MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 4, 2000

2:30 - 4:00

140 NOLTE CENTER

[These minutes reflect discussion and debate at a meeting of a committee of the University of Minnesota Senate or Twin Cities Campus Assembly; none of the comments, conclusions, or actions reported in these minutes represent the view of, nor are they binding on the Senate or Assembly, the Administration, or the Board of Regents.]

PRESENT: Percy Chaby (chair), Bryan Donaldson, Tina Falkner, Darwin Hendel, David Lenander, Ryan Nagle, Hoang Uyen Nguyen, Janet Schottel, Cory Stingl, Jason Stingl.

REGRETS: Jane Canney, Jean-Marie Del-Santo, Edward Ehlinger, Yasemin Kaygisiz.

ABSENT: Terry Hietpas.

GUESTS: Bob Baker, Robert Jones, Lance Patrick, Bill Stahlmann, Maggie Towle.

1. APPROVAL OF STUDENT BEHAVIOR HEARING PROCEDURES

Becky Hippert started by noting that the General Counsel agreed that student affairs staff could be defined as broader than just OSD staff. With this interpretation, there were no other questions. The procedures were then approved.

2. STUDENT FEES TASK FORCE UPDATE

Percy Chaby reported that a web page is being designed to allow people to complete a survey on the fees process and bring forth as many issues as possible so that another task force will not need to be formed next year. The ultimate goal is to define and adhere to a policy of viewpoint neutrality.

Q: What is the focus for the survey?

A: It will allow student input on any issue regarding the student fees process as well as their definition of viewpoint neutrality. Another aim is also to raise awareness of the fees process in general.

Q: How will the survey be communicated to students?

A: An e-mail will be sent to all students, notice will be posted in the CIC newsletter, and questions will be incorporated in the CIC survey.

Q: What is the timeline?

A: The task force would like to finish by next semester but that goal does not seem realistic with everything that needs to be done.

Q: When does next year's process start?

A: It has already started so the task force report will not affect this year's process.

3. U-PASS

Bob Baker distributed a sheet on the number of passes bought and provided a background on the U-Pass program. He noted that ridership levels are unscientific, so the University and Metro Transit needed to agree on a figure before planning could start. This figure was 7020, roughly 13% of the University's population. A federal grant was then applied for to subsidize the program for the first two years, with the intent that ridership be increased by 40% over the same period.

Enrollment started August 15 and so far 8424, or 27% of the population, has been enrolled. The program is designed to allow people to apply by computer and charge the pass to STARS, a credit card, or pay by check. He expressed hope that ridership would again increase once winter came and people did not want to drive in those conditions.

Throughout the process, the University will continue to market the pass and work with Metro Transit to determine if ridership patterns mandate changes in existing routes or creations of new routes. Marketing is being conducted by billboards, signs on bus shelters, ads in local newspapers, a University-wide mailing and e-mail, and the recent transportation fair.

Q: Has the U-Pass helped the parking situation?

A: No since 40,000 people are still driving to campus with only 19,000 available parking spaces. It is a good start to changing behavior, but it will be a long process. Program objectives have been to take advantage of a captive audience, offer a new option, and mold future behavior.

Q: How long will the program run?

A: The grant, which is non-renewable, will fund two years and perhaps one additional semester. There will likely be a strong political support once ridership figures can be produced. Funding will also be available through a student fees. All students will pay \$5 per semester this year, \$7.50 per semester next year, and \$10 per semester the third year to generate \$1 million. The cost of passes would also be raised if new routes were added.

Q: Where is the fee assessed?

A: It is listed as a transportation fee on the fee statement.

Q: Why is it not a part of the student service fee?

A: This approach was tried three years ago and failed. After consulting with MSA and GAPSA, it was decided that a separate fee would be better. This approach was supported by various student groups, including MPIRG, and the President.

Q: How many faculty are using this program?

A: Faculty and staff are eligible for Metro Pass. The exact number of each group is not needed since the total ridership is all that matters.

Q: Have programs like this been successful at other institutions?

A: Comparison is hard because there are so many factors to account for. In other areas, growth has been between 20% and 200%, depending on the price and available parking.

Bob Baker admitted that bus service is not perfect, but it needs to be improved to deal with the increases in urban sprawl. Metro Transit is committed to change. He said that he would be willing to return to the committee in the spring to provide an update on enrollees and possible ridership figures.

4. COFFMAN UNION UPDATE

Lance Patrick, Twin Cities Student Unions President, Maggie Towle, Director the Twin Cities Unions, and Robert Jones, Interim Vice President for Student Development, addressed the CMU renovation delay. Maggie Towle noted that a letter and e-mail had been sent to all students regarding the delay. There are some legal issues that prohibit the disclosure of most information, except the fact that there is a delay because of construction bids coming in over what was originally projected.

The Board of Governors is working with the administration to find a solution as soon as possible. No one wants to ask for more money from the students, so instead private fundraising is being considered. Students are being involved at every step in the process.

Lance Patrick noted that much work has already been done to CMU, unlike what was reported in the Minnesota Daily. Asbestos abatement and removal of structures is finished so that construction can start as soon as a contract is signed.

Robert Jones stated that the administration is committed to working with the students to complete this project.

Q: How much were bids over budget?

A: The budget was \$45 million and the bids received were \$ 9 - 17 million over.

Q: Is this range higher than normal?

A: Yes since most bids are just slightly over projected costs. We realize that it is a hot construction market, but these costs seem incredibly high.

Q: Where would private funding be found?

A: We are looking at any private source, but are still working on the process of soliciting funding with Gerald Fischer. Last year, ASAC and the Civil Service Committee also passed resolutions in support of voluntary staff deductions to pay for renovations.

Q: Have alumni been contacted?

A: CMU is included in the Capital Campaign and CMU has a alumni special interest group that will be targeted.

Q: What is the viability of additional private funding versus changing the renovation to fit the budget?

A: Both alternatives are currently being looked at.

Q: Is there a list of items that can be deleted from the project?

A: Items were identified last spring that amount to a 10% deduction in the cost. Air conditioning is not on the deduct list.

Q: What would be the future costs to complete items deducted from the renovation today?

A: There is no way to tell how much more these items would cost, but it is hard to justify the expenses without the necessary funds.

Q: What about Riverbend Commons?

A: The parking garage is under construction and the residence hall is in the planning stages.

Q: What is the next step to continue the renovation?

A: There are still questions to be answered and administrative and student input is needed to determine the best direction.

Q: Will CMU consider allowing private businesses inside?

A: We are working with Aramark to make this work. Corporate sponsorship is also being considered for areas in CMU to provide additional funding.

A member commented that it does not seem that enough space has been projected for technology. It was suggested that the Gates Foundation be contacted since they are contributing funds to all levels of educational institutions to increase technology.

Q: What is the projected completion date?

A: There is nothing set yet, but it will be at least six months later.

Members noted that students understand the problem and just want a solution found.

5. OTHER BUSINESS

Members discussed the following future agenda items:

STUDENT TICKETS

- Prices and availability for athletic tickets
- Students support athletics but should not carry the financial burden
- Tickets prices should be received from other comparable schools
- Some school give free tickets to the winners of student lotteries
- Increased publication of non-revenue sports is needed
- Non-athletic tickets should also be included
- An events calendar is needed
- Increased communication to students, such as advertisements on one-stop pages
- Sell unsold and unclaimed tickets 30 minutes before events
- Develop a student pass for non-revenue sports events and other non-athletic events
- Events calendar would be utilized more if central administration asked departments to use it
- Develop a version of 'Brief' for students
- Where to find information is a problem which is why centralization would help

LIGHT RAIL

A member noted that the Finance and Planning Committee had been given a presentation by Jan Morlock on light rail, train routes, and express buses. The timeline is for completion of some new services by 2004-05, so this would be the time to provide student input. Another member said that they also know someone outside the University who is working on this issue and could provide more information. It was decided that this topic would be scheduled for the November meeting.

REGISTRAR

Tina Falkner reported that the web registration system is being simplified to remove the multiple confirmations that are now needed to drop a class. New components are also being added, such as live seat count. Financial aid on the web is the next priority. Members noted that course guide

links need to include information for all courses, which might involve follow-ups with faculty and departments to receive the information.

TECHMART

A member noted that Techmart's pricing is considerably higher than what was previously offered through the University, which is the opposite of the goal for the system. Another member noted that people also cannot see products before purchasing, but that products are now shipped directly to departments. It was noted that the Bookstores were losing money each year because of the Computer Store, so Bob Crabb asked that this piece be removed. These concerns will be brought to the attention of Shih-Pau Yen.

Other future issues should include a student evaluations of teaching update from Craig Swan and working to get more bike racks on campus.

With no further business, Percy Chaby thanked everyone for attending and adjourned the meeting.

Rebecca Hippert
University Senate