

SENATE COMMITTEE ON STUDENT AFFAIRS  
MINUTES OF MEETING  
APRIL 16, 2003

[In these minutes: Review and Discussion of MPCC Draft Statement, 2002 Graduate Exit Survey Results]

[These minutes reflect discussion and debate at a meeting of a committee of the University Senate or Twin Cities 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: Cheryl Meyers, chair, Yasemin Kaygisiz, Gerald Rinehart, Jim Turman, Gabriele Schmiegel

REGRETS: Janet Schottel, Nick Cecconi, Tina Falkner

ABSENT: David Lenander, Amy Lee, Kari Lindeman

OTHER(S): Adam VonWagner

I). Professor Meyers called the meeting to order and welcomed all present.

II). The committee reviewed and discussed changes it wanted made to its position statement on the Minnesota Private College Council's (MPCC) high tuition/high aid proposal prior to it being sent to the SSCC. Discussion highlights included:

- The MPCC did not clearly explain how a high tuition/high aid model would benefit minority students in post secondary education.
- Is the goal of the MPCC proposal to increase minority enrollment in private institutions or to ultimately provide a workforce for the state?
- Because the MPCC is not advocating increasing its capacity, how will increased minority enrollment be accommodated? Basically it seems that the MPCC would like its existing students to receive larger financial aid packages.
- No rational argument was put forward by the MPCC to substantiate their argument. Why should private institutions receive any state funding? Taxpayer's money should go to public education.
- If financial aid is given to a student attending a private college, taxpayer's money can be spent by areas chosen by that institution and not by elected/appointed representatives. The University, on the other hand, is directly responsible to the state that supports it. In turn, it provides services to the state such as research, etc. Private institutions have no obligation to return value to the state.
- The MPCC proposal does not convincingly argue how it would increase the workforce or how it would increase the involvement of minorities in post secondary education. There is basically not enough evidence to support the rationale.

- Why should a student attending a private college be given more state aid than a student attending a public institution?
- Given the dramatic fiscal times, a change like that proposed by the MPCC is simply not warranted. Even in the best of times such a proposal would be questionable.
- A funding formula that is equitable for all students irrespective of the cost of the institution they choose to attend needs to be maintained.
- Theoretically it costs the same amount of money to attend a private college as it does to attend a public institution. The difference is that the University receives state money to build buildings, etc.
- Basically, the MPCC is proposing a different way to handle a voucher system.
- Private colleges started before public institutions in this country. Historically, this may have influenced legislation from the beginning.
- Philosophically the committee does not agree with the high tuition/high aid model proposed by the MPCC.
- The MPCC proposal's argument is that they are increasing state grant money for all students attending either public or private institutions. Therefore, the University of Minnesota, as a public institution, provides a valuable service to the state and the MPCC proposal is damaging to this role. The MPCC proposal would directly shift money from the University to other sources.

The SCSA's first draft statement on the MPCC proposal would be revised to incorporate ideas generated at today's meeting. The revised statement will be circulated to members via email and they will be asked to vote in favor or against the statement. Then, these results will be forwarded to SSCC.

III). Professor Meyers welcomed Vice Provost Craig Swan and asked that he talk about and share results from the 2002 Graduate Exit Survey with the committee. Vice Provost Swan distributed copies of the survey results to members for their reference. Highlights from his presentation included:

- The last time a similar survey was conducted was 1989. In the future, surveys will be conducted on a regular basis. Future surveys will alternate between a long survey such as the 2002 survey and a condensed version.
- Despite the fact there were many factors working against the 2002 graduating senior's overall experience while at the University (Coffman Union was closed for almost 3 years, Walter Library was closed for renovation, etc.), survey results were very positive.
- Positive responses were recorded for the faculty's willingness to vary their teaching approaches.
- Half of the people that graduated and completed the survey indicated that they knew what they wanted to major in when they started at the University and, indeed, graduated with that major.
- Only 11% of students indicated for one reason or another they could not pursue their first major.

- Survey results will be used, in part, during orientation to help make incoming students' experiences more positive. It appears there are things students can do to have a demonstrable impact on their level of satisfaction while attending the University e.g. attend convocation, get involved in community service, attend sports events, become involved in campus groups and activities, attend freshmen seminars, work closely with an advisor, etc.
- The survey indicates that younger students have higher levels of satisfaction overall than older students. This, in part, can be attributed to the fact that older students tend to be juggling many things in their lives besides school.
- Students that receive better grades show higher levels of satisfaction.
- Overall women receive better grades than men.
- Freshman students show higher levels of satisfaction than transfer students.
- Students that graduate in four years show higher levels of satisfaction than students that take longer.
- Students attending the Carlson School of Management graduated at higher rates than those attending other colleges. This type of information helps the University identify where it needs to do a better job.
- These survey results have been shared with the Council of Undergraduate Deans. All of the colleges received a complete data set of their students (no names) so they can do any additional analysis they would like to do.
- This survey needs to be seen in a broader context with other surveys conducted by the University.
- Fifty-two percent of students said they graduated without any credit card debt and 2.5% said they had over \$9,000 in credit card debt.
- The administration is still struggling with how best to organize this immense amount of data in an efficient manner so it leads to action items and identifies problem areas as well as things the University should be proud of.
- The University plans to share some of questions it used in the survey with the CIC in an attempt to see if there are any questions that all schools in the Big 10 can ask and use for comparison purposes.

Professor Meyers thanked Vice Provost Swan for attending today's meeting and sharing this information with the committee.

IV). Professor Meyers charged Renee Dempsey with emailing members to try and arrange a May 2003 meeting date.

V). Hearing no further business, Professor Meyers adjourned the meeting.

Renee Dempsey  
University Senate