

SENATE COMMITTEE ON STUDENT AFFAIRS
MINUTES OF MEETING
MAY 4, 2007

[In these minutes: myU Portal demonstration, Student Development Outcomes, Adult Learner and Student Parent Committee Report]

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

PRESENT: Maria McRae, chair, Nathan Pelzer, Amelious Whyte, Jennifer Engler, Andy Howe, Kim Roufs, Olga Zakharenko Caroline Younts

REGRETS: Kendre Turonie, Jean-Marie Del-Santo, Carolyn Nayematsu, Jessica Arett, Eric Brown, Maureen Kunkler, Hilary Ploeckelmann

ABSENT: Catherine Solheim, Ian McConnell, Jeffrey Wencil

OTHERS ATTENDING: Gabrielle Schmiegel, Susan Warfield

GUEST: Vice Provost for Student Affairs Jerry Rinehart

I). Maria McRae called the meeting to order.

II). Andy Howe noted that over the past couple years a great deal of work has been put into revamping the current undergraduate myU Portal structure. Surveys and focus groups uncovered that in order for students to use myU Portal it needed to contain content relevant to students and have features that students could customize. The ultimate goal is to have an application that students will use, and an effective way for the University to communicate with students.

Mr. Howe demonstrated features of myU Portal to the committee, particularly aspects of the application that will improve how faculty communicate with students. He noted that a solid communication plan will be used to introduce this application and its features to the University community once it is ready to be rolled out. This is a systemwide project, added Mr. Howe.

Ms. McRae thanked Mr. Howe for his presentation.

III). Ms. McRae welcomed Vice Provost for Student Affairs Jerry Rinehart who was invited to provide information on Student Development Outcomes. Vice Provost Rinehart reported that the Student Development Outcomes were brought before the University Senate yesterday where they were endorsed. Consultation is currently

underway with various groups to introduce the Student Development Outcomes in conjunction with the Student Learning Outcomes.

In addition to achieving curriculum outcomes, noted Vice Provost Rinehart, there are other aspects of a student's educational experience that are equally as important; thus, the development of the Student Development Outcomes. These outcomes (<http://www.osa.umn.edu/outcomes/index.html>) are not requirements per se, but rather planning and guiding principles to help students think about their educational experience. Vice Provost Rinehart hopes that students will use the language in these outcomes as a tool to talk about their University experience.

On a semi-related note, a student commented on the evaluation of instruction format, which she stated is not conducive to allowing students in the arts to adequately evaluate their instructors. The current format is set up for more traditional types of courses. Vice Provost Rinehart encouraged the Senate Committee on Student Affairs (SCSA) to explore this concern further. This issue should be brought to the attention of SCEP.

Ms. McRae thanked Vice Provost Rinehart for sharing information on the Student Development Outcomes with the committee.

IV). Next, Ms. McRae welcomed Susan Warfield, director, Student Parent Help Center. Ms. Warfield was invited to provide the committee with a report on the work of the Adult Learner and Student Parent Committee. She began by noting that the Adult Learner and Student Parent (ALSP) Committee, which reports to the Office of Student Affairs, was formed in the spring of 2003 to look at how non-traditional students are being served at the University. Members on this ad hoc committee have, up until now, all been self-appointed. Besides having representation from different departments across campus, the committee has student representation as well.

This committee, since its inception, has looked at service gaps for student parents and non-traditional aged undergraduate students at the University, and worked to close these gaps. The committee has accomplished all of its original goals, and now believes it needs higher visibility and greater buy-in from the University community. Having said this, the ALSP Committee is proposing that it become a subcommittee of SCSA. Becoming a SCSA subcommittee would make it more responsible in terms of reporting lines and make the issues it deals with more visible.

A member asked why, after 4 years, this committee would like to become a subcommittee of SCSA. Ms. Warfield stated that this discussion actually started a couple years ago when it was decided that the non-traditional student population needed more visibility. Also, the sense of urgency has been heightened in light of the expected increase in the number of veterans that will be attending the University. The University needs to do a better job of addressing the issues of its non-traditional students.

Does the ALSP Committee have a website, asked a member. Ms. Warfield noted that the Reentry Students Organization has its own website, which can be found at

<http://blog.lib.umn.edu/john2567/reentry/052316.html>. The Adult Learners and Student Parents Advisory Committee has its own site, which can be found at <http://www.tc.umn.edu/~alsp/index.html>.

Based on the information shared today, it was the consensus of the committee that before it was comfortable endorsing the idea that the ALSP Committee should become a subcommittee of SCSA, more information was needed in terms of a mission statement, meeting schedule, membership information, etc. Once this information has been gathered, and in accordance with Senate rules for establishing a Senate subcommittee, SCSA could then vote on this matter. A member asked that as part of the proposal that will be brought back to SCSA, information on how the subcommittee would interface with SCSA should be included. The question of whether there actually needs to be a separate subcommittee was raised or whether non-traditional student issues could be woven into the current SCSA charge, similar to how the committee deals with international student issues.

Ms. Warfield and Amelious Whyte volunteered to work on gathering the information the committee requested over the summer, and to come back and share it with the committee in the fall.

In light of time, Maria McRae noted that in her opinion this is a very important issue and one that the committee should return to next year.

V). Hearing no further business, Maria McRae adjourned the meeting.

Renee Dempsey
University Senate