

Minutes\*

**Senate Consultative Committee**  
**Thursday, April 19, 2007**  
**3:00 – 4:30**  
**Room 238A Morrill Hall**

- Present: Carol Chomsky (chair), Gary Balas, Jean Bauer, Nancy Carpenter, Jacqueline Cottingham-Zierdt, Stacy Deery, Kristen Denzer, Stacy Doepner-Hove, Megan Gunnar, Emily Hoover, Mary Jo Kane, Judith Martin, Daniel Moore, Jennifer Windsor
- Absent: William Durfee, Barbara Elliott, Jeni Kiewatt, Scott Lanyon, Cathy Marquardt, Sara Mattison, Nelson Rhodus, Trent Senenfelder, John Sullivan, Margaret Wolff
- Guests: Bree Richards (Student Senate Consultative Committee); Vice Provosts Arlene Carney and Gerald Rinehart (Office of the Provost)
- Others: Becky Hippert (University Senate office)

[In these minutes: (1) rule on attendance at meetings; (2) Student Development Outcomes (which will be on the University Senate docket 5/3/07); (3) University Senate docket (including a discussion about a resolution requesting more options for ethnic self-identification)]

## **1. Attendance at Meetings**

Professor Chomsky convened the meeting at 3:00 and turned to Ms. Richards to raise a question about attendance at meetings.

Ms. Richards said they are concerned about lack of student attendance at Senate meetings and the attendance lists are not published. The Senate office tracks attendance, and the information can be obtained, but it is not on the web and it is difficult to hold people accountable. (The current rule is that students lose their Senate seat for missing any two meetings; for faculty and staff, the rule is that they lose their seat after missing three consecutive meetings if they do not obtain an alternate and do not let the Senate office know they will be unable to attend.)

Ms. Denzer inquired why the rule is different for students and faculty/staff; the answer was that the rule on the attendance of students is the one the students requested. Professor Balas explained that each group sets its own rules and the faculty and staff preferred the three-consecutive-meeting rule. Attendance has not generally been a problem for faculty and staff, Professor Chomsky noted. Ms. Cottingham-Zierdt pointed out that the Senate office sends a letter to individuals who miss a Senate meeting, reminding them of the rules.

Professor Balas said he would not object to making the attendance list available, something that is public for the U.S. Senate as well. Professor Hoover suggested listing Senators by college.

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\* These minutes reflect discussion and debate at a meeting of a committee of the University of Minnesota Senate; none of the comments, conclusions, or actions reported in these minutes represents the views of, nor are they binding on, the Senate, the Administration, or the Board of Regents.

Professor Windsor mentioned that it is sometimes difficult to find an alternate to attend a Senate meeting, especially if one cannot find an alternative within the department.

It was agreed the Committee supported making the alternate system more user-friendly (some colleges identify alternatives, some do not), to create an expectation that alternates would be named, and that attendance would be posted on the Senate web site (details to be worked out).

## **2. Student Development Outcomes**

Professor Chomsky now welcomed Vice Provost Arlene Carney and Vice Provost Gerald Rinehart to the meeting to discuss the revised Student Development Outcomes.

Vice Provost Rinehart distributed copies of the Student Development Outcomes (SDOs) and commented that he has been involved in discussions about the SDOs for some time. [Note: the Student Development Outcomes are distinct from the Student Learning Outcomes or SLOs, which are also discussed in these minutes.] The SDOs are used in student affairs offices to help students understand what they can gain from their overall experiences at the University—the outcomes provide language which can help students tell a clear story about what they accomplished. There is nothing magical about the list and one could use other synonyms; but it is important that the list is explicit. It is valuable to make explicit our belief that students will learn and grow throughout their University experiences—that learning is not confined to the classroom. Few institutions articulate these goals and simply assume they will happen. The goal is to develop a common language about what students have learned and be able to talk about it. The University cares about both learning and development outcomes; they are intertwined, Mr. Rinehart said, and it is difficult to believe a student could achieve the learning outcomes and not the development outcomes.

Committee members examined two different versions of the SDOs, one with more detailed bullet points and one with single-sentence descriptions. The Committee ultimately approved for the Senate docket, with some changes, the version that contained sentences (see below).

How will they be implemented, Professor Martin asked? Does one get a certificate? There won't be tests; what will be measured? These are like the mission statement, Mr. Rinehart said; they are what the University believes. They are discovering ways to assess the development outcomes (e.g., through student employment, use of electronic portfolios), but achieving them is not a requirement and one does not receive a certificate. The SDOs can be worked into advisor's discussions with students; the goal is make them a part of the environment of the campus. There will not be a check-off list. Other activities that might promote the SDOs include service learning activities, learning abroad, and UROP, Dr. Carney commented.

Ms. Cottingham-Zierdt said the SDOs were very culturally-laden. In her community (American Indian), for example, one would never put "self confidence" and "humility" together. The version of the Outcomes with extensive bullet points [not ultimately adopted by the Committee] is particularly culturally specific, she said. This is not just a distraction; at measurement time this would be a big deal. If these are laid out as institutional values, even with no consequences for students who do not attain them, they could be trouble for Indian students—not because they want to create problems but because their culture differs. The University needs to send a message that people are accepted for who they are. Committee members discussed Ms. Cottingham-Zierdt's point for some time and agreed with her. The Committee ultimately

concluded it did not care for "Self Confidence/Humility" and requested that that objective be changed to "Self Awareness."

Professor Gunnar said it would be nice if there were a self-assessment tool available for students, as well as suggestions if they wished to strengthen their achievements in certain areas. And if there are conflicts with the student's culture, there could be suggestions about where they might go to talk about how to mesh their culture with the majority culture. Dr. Carney said they have talked about ways to have students reflect and assess their experiences; the hope is that as they graduate and prepare for a job or graduate school, having written reflections will give them a leg up when they must do the same for another activity. If the funding is available, Mr. Rinehart added, they intend to have a student engagement planner with a database of activities available that would vary with the field.

If these objectives are already used and promoted, what is the purpose of Senate adoption, Professor Chomsky inquired? Senate action would provide official imprimatur and help others incorporate these objectives in their activities, Mr. Rinehart explained, and they are not just seen as student activities objectives. Faculty can use the language in letters of recommendation, for example.

Ms. Deery said she did not know the genesis of the SDOs and wondered why there are both learning outcomes and development outcomes, rather than one big set of outcomes. Mr. Rinehart explained that the faculty felt more comfortable adopting learning outcomes, with the assumption that eventually there will be assessment; they were less willing to adopt development outcomes with that same assumption. Dr. Carney recalled that the process of developing the learning outcomes started in 2002, in preparation for the accreditation site visit for the Twin Cities campus; at the same time, Mr. Rinehart was working on the development outcomes. They should be seen together as a continuum, she said; the University expects students will both learn and develop.

Students do not experience these outcomes as these silos, Ms. Deery said; they see their undergraduate years as all one experience, and there is a lot of overlap between the two. When she had a student affairs job she worked on both objectives with students. Did they consider combining them? Dr. Carney agreed they should be listed together, and that students have one experience, but the University is asking faculty to put the learning outcomes on syllabi and is looking for specific implementation. Professor Chomsky agreed that the learning and development outcomes are often related but pointed out that they are structured as they are because the Faculty Senate will adopt the learning outcomes and the University Senate will adopt the development outcomes; faculty members can use them together.

Ms. Denzer asked if the SLOs and SDOs would be measured along with the liberal education themes, etc. Dr. Carney said they would not. This is an overarching structure; the content will be the liberal education requirements. The SLOs, for example, do not constitute a check-off list like liberal education requirements (which the Council on Liberal Education would like to get away from), but advisors might say to a student "you have done great on X, Y, and Z, but you have not done much on W; are you sure you understand it?" Neither of these are graduation requirements, she said. The point is to instill accountability in the institution, Mr. Rinehart said. The University is saying what it expects; if it is not achieving these outcomes with students, it needs to fix the approach, not punish the students. They are working with departments that have volunteered to examine their curriculum to see how they are doing across these areas. If they are doing well, the University can use these outcomes as a selling point for students, Dr. Carney said. There is no expectation every student would try to achieve these objectives in every class, Professor Hoover added.

Professor Martin asked if the SDOs were ready for Senate action. The proposal is to bring a concept with no idea about how it will be implemented. How will they be demonstrated? How will they be measured? Professor Chomsky pointed out that the concept of the Student Learning Outcomes is also being brought to the Faculty Senate without a plan for how they will be implemented. There will be an introductory explanation of what the SDOs are, how they will be used, and why it is important that the Senate endorse general principles. If there is a lot of debate, she said, they can be tabled until the fall Senate meeting, and the Senate can be informed that if it believes it needs more time to discuss them, it can take it. Dr. Carney said that there has been thought given to implementation of the learning outcomes and there are plans. Some would think there is a secret plan, a hidden agenda, that will be pushed on departments, Professor Hoover commented. That is not the case, Dr. Carney said, and the fact is that if the University does not take ownership of the learning outcomes, it is probable some outside group will. This is not a reaction to the Spellings Commission, however, because development of the learning outcomes started long before it was created.

Ms. Cottingham-Zierdt said that because there are no longer any targeted programs (because of a fear of Ward Connerly and his anti-affirmative-action campaigns), institutions are not offering path-breaking programs. The institution is adopting the SDOs and saying to students it wants them to come here and learn this. But tribes and parents will say they will not send their children here because it will attempt to change their culture. There are consequences to adopting these outcomes. The value system they reflect everyone can accept but they could be off-putting to certain cultures. Students would leave and not come back. They might leave because they do not know why they are here, Mr. Rinehart commented, and the development outcomes say it is important to participate in activities and reflect on them.

The problem is in the details, not the categories, Ms. Cottingham-Zierdt said. The University needs to think about the world students are moving into and the world they come from. It must be multi-ethnic but it will do students a disservice if it does not inform them about the world they will be entering. The question is how to help them move into a new world and also allow them to retain their own identity. And also be aware of other cultures while living together, Professor Bauer added.

Professor Windsor asked if implementation of the Student Learning Outcomes would go forward with or without Senate approval. Dr. Carney said they would not; several departments have asked if they could work on the learning outcomes but she has said they should wait for Senate approval. Departments will not act on either set of outcomes unless they are University policy (i.e., adopted by the Senate and approved by the administration). There is talk about the obligation, down the road, to demonstrate the learning outcomes to the University's accrediting agency. They will do a pilot study with departments that are enthusiastic about the learning outcomes in order to identify the roadblocks and the positive elements. The first couple of years they want departments to participate because they support the learning outcomes. This is a vote to begin that process, nothing more, Professor Bauer said. Dr. Carney agreed. Other institutions have mandated use of the learning outcomes; they would prefer to create buy-in and identify problems, and allow departments to learn from each other, and at the end of 3-5 years have undergraduate units participating.

The version of the Student Development Outcomes approved for the Senate reads as follows (this version reflects change incorporated following the meeting but reflecting discussion at the meeting):

MOTION:

That the Twin Cities Delegation of the University Senate endorses the following development outcomes as guiding principles for undergraduate students in planning and reflecting upon their experiences within and beyond the classroom.

As they progress toward their degree, University of Minnesota undergraduates will develop and demonstrate the following characteristics:

- *Responsibility and Accountability* by making appropriate decisions on behavior and accepting the consequences of their actions.
- *Independence and Interdependence* by knowing when to collaborate or seek help and when to act on their own.
- *Goal Orientation* by managing their energy and attention to achieve specific outcomes.
- *Self Awareness* by knowing their personal strengths and talents and acknowledging their shortcomings.
- *Resilience* by recovering and learning from setbacks or disappointments.
- *Appreciation of Differences* by recognizing the value of interacting with individuals with backgrounds and/or perspectives different from their own.
- *Tolerance of Ambiguity* by demonstrating the ability to perform in complicated environments where clear cut answers or standard operating procedures are absent.

Professor Chomsky thanked Vice Provosts Carney and Rinehart for joining the meeting.

**3. University Senate Docket**

The Committee turned now to the University Senate docket and discussed a "Resolution on Admission Application," which called for expanding the categories by which students may self-identify their ethnic background. Mr. Moore explained that at present there is no option for a student to identify as Middle Eastern and Hispanic and Latin American are together (when, for example, some school might prefer to include categories such as Puerto-Rican American and Chicano/Mexican American).. The changes proposed in the resolution are a minimum standard and it allows colleges to use their own categories in addition.

Professor Windsor said the categories will need to be consistent with census data, which matters for funding for federal grants. Ms. Cottingham-Zierdt agreed; she pointed out that students must be told that they can have as many choices as they wish, but the responses will be rolled up into categories recognized by federal guidelines. Mr. Moore said that internal processes already do that but that this gives students the opportunity to check whichever box they wish and the institution to do what it needs to. Professor Windsor said that the "whereas" clauses in the resolution imply the categories it calls for will be used by the University, but that is not correct. The University will have to collapse the categories, by

federal law, and the University must be clear it cannot track all of the boxes, unless this is a suggestion for two reporting systems. Or the categories could be inconsistent across departments, Ms. Cottingham-Zierdt added. There will be no opportunity to talk to students about which federal category their response might be incorporated in, Professor Windsor observed. That is already the case, Professor Chomsky said, and is acceptable if the categorization is defensible.

Ms. Cottingham-Zierdt said that CAPA took the position that students should be notified their responses will be rolled into federally-required categories. CAPA also suggested that since the categories all indicate origin by geographic region (e.g., Black/African-American, Hispanic/Latin American, South Asian American) except for "White," that category be changed to White/European American.

There is no box for a range of different countries/regions of origin. There is the "Other" category, Professor Chomsky said. The more boxes there are, the more these particular categories are reified, Professor Windsor said. Professor Bauer said she liked the option, suggested in a footnote, that "bi" or "multi" be added as choices, allowing recognition of more than one category. Other, she said, is not the same. Mr. Moore noted that there is also the option to self-identify, with a blank the student can fill in. Some might feel they wish to check a box or self-identify, Professor Windsor said, but others could feel that if they do so they will be targeted. Professor Chomsky said the University provides the opportunity because some students want to self-identify, for protective reasons, but students can decide they do not wish to do so.

The Committee approved the docket. Professor Chomsky adjourned the meeting at 4:40.

[Note: the resolution on ethnic self-identification categories was pulled from the docket, with the consent of the author, when several University offices identified potential difficulties with it. The issues will be revisited in the fall.]

-- Gary Engstrand

University of Minnesota