

Minutes*

**Senate Committee on Faculty Affairs
Tuesday, October 15, 2002
2:30 – 4:30
238A Morrill Hall**

Present: John Fossum (chair), Carole Bland, Carol Carrier, Terence Collins, Jesse Daniels, Richard Goldstein, Darwin Hendel, Robert Jones, Theodor Litman, Cleon Melsa, Wade Savage, Carol Wells, Timothy Wiedmann, Aks Zaheer

Absent: Kent Bales, A. Saari Csallany, William Garrard, Dwight Purdy, Kathleen Sellew, Larry Wallace, Thomas Walsh

Guests: Professor Edwin Fogelman, Chair, Civic Engagement Council

[In these minutes: (1) civic engagement and research; (2) report on post-tenure review; (3) academic unit governance policy]

1. Civic Engagement

Professor Fossum convened the meeting at 2:40 and welcomed Professor Fogelman to discuss civic engagement. This has been a subject of interest to the Committee and it has had a number of discussions on it.

Professor Fogelman recalled that there had been a task force that worked for two years on issues of civic engagement; there was also a Board of Regents' committee and an Administrative Advisory Committee to the provost. All three groups agreed on a recommendation to create a Council on Public Engagement; the first meeting of the Council will be October 17. The Council includes administrators, faculty, staff, and students from across the University and will serve as a catalyst to embed public engagement more deeply in institutional practices and help gain public support for the University.

Macalester College placed a full-page advertisement in the New York Times, the center of which read "Beyond the Campus Walls: At Macalester College, civic engagement is the way we do business" and the title of message text from the President of Macalester read "Civic and Social Engagement. Now More Than Ever." Professor Fogelman distributed copies of the ad to the Committee. This is, he said, an example of what institutional commitment to public engagement can mean.

There are two underling issues in the initiative. The largest is this: What are the responsibilities of higher education in the American democratic society? Historically, higher education has played a number of roles in American society, and nationally has been grappling with its uncertain role since the end of the Cold War. There was a general consensus about the role of higher education after World War II--and it received a lot of funding. Since the end of the Cold War, however, the question has arisen again of what its role should be in a democratic society.

* 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 represents the views of, nor are they binding on, the Senate or Assembly, the Administration, or the Board of Regents.

The second issue is what kind of institutional identity the University wants to project to itself and to the outside. This is an important but unsettled issue, Professor Fogelman said--is the University the engine of economic growth, a source of technological innovation, or is there a civic contribution that should be at the core of the institution's identity? He said he believed there should be and that is what this initiative is about. There will be a variety of benefits from taking this view, from increased meaning to the professional work of the faculty to students who welcome the opportunity to have ways to become engaged civically. For many faculty, their work is enhanced by connections to the community but they are concerned that such work is not recognized or rewarded.

Does this mean more work for the faculty? He has always answered "no" to that question, Professor Fogelman related. This is not an add-on; it must pervade what faculty do. What is important is to recognize that public engagement is vital; it should affect what is taught, how, and what research people do. It will affect different people differently; it means different things to different faculty. Faculty in the natural sciences are discovering they can have a responsibility to talk to the public. He said he has been gratified by the response from faculty across the University who recognize the value of public scholarship.

The University has a lot at stake politically, Professor Fogelman concluded, and there is a strong case to make.

Professor Savage related that when this subject has come up in the past he has thought "not again." He said he saw it as an add-on because civic engagement is not intrinsic to faculty work or interests; some see it as futile. The reason Macalester produces civically engaged graduates is because civic engagement is built into its curriculum, not an add-on. Its courses encourage people to think about social and ethical issues in a way that a curriculum organized such as the University's does not. If students do not take courses that focus on civic engagement, but instead focus only on their professional goals, it will be difficult for the University to produce civically-engaged students.

The University produces a lot of civically-engaged people as well, Professor Fogelman said. There was a special program at Macalester that brought in Kofi Annan; the University could have a program like that as well. More fundamentally, does the University want to produce professionals who have no sense of the civic dimensions of their work? What kind of work is not affected by public policy?

Should civic engagement be introduced into the curriculum, Professor Savage asked? It should, Professor Fogelman said, but not necessarily in the entire curriculum; it should be incorporated in part of it, however. It is disturbing to think the University is producing people for the professions who have had no opportunity to engage, be aware of, or have skills in civic engagement. Macalester is not a model for the University but the University must take its responsibility seriously so that ALL students encounter civic engagement during their undergraduate career--or what kind of citizens will they be?

Should this be accomplished by curriculum requirements, Professor Savage inquired? That question is before a subcommittee of the Committee on Educational Policy, Professor Fogelman; the Council on Public Engagement also has a committee addressing the question.

Civic engagement must be integrated across the three-part mission of the University, Dr. Jones said. It can be taught in the curriculum but without hands-on experience it will not have any effect in the

long run. It must pervade all that people do. Professor Fogelman agreed. That is what distinguishes the effort at the University of Minnesota (at other places, it consists of service learning or the extension service or public scholarship; at the University there is a more comprehensive approach so that it will pervade the core activities of the institution). Basic researchers can see connections to the public in ways they have not previously thought of; asked if they value the public aspects of what they are doing, many say "yes." This may lead departments to reach out to the public, may lead to public pedagogy.

What obstacles does the Public Engagement Council see, Dr. Jones asked? There are a number, Professor Fogelman said. The incentive and reward structure of the University does not recognize public engagement appropriately. Some faculty believe it would be a mistake for them to do something different because it could affect whether they receive tenure, are promoted, and any merit decisions about them.

Should the changes occur at the department level, Professor Collins asked? All the way through the University, Professor Fogelman said. There are some units where job descriptions include connection to the community. This is not for all departments but there are places where it should be. The changes start at the department level but also involve deans and the provost. There is also the question of what the DISCIPLINES value. In his personal view, the ideology of detached research emerged at a particular historical time but is not in accord with how research is done in many fields to respond to social needs.

Professor Bland said she has tried to think about what specifically people would be asked to do. The Medical School has a course on the Physician and Society, students must take an oath about their commitment to society, and the Medical School faculty does a lot of outreach. How are they to behave differently? With respect to the reward system, they must get the funds for what they do in order to pay their salaries; if there are no external funds and no tuition dollars there is no way to pay for civic engagement. She said she did not know how one could ask the faculty to do more.

There is much already going on, Professor Fogelman agreed, especially in the professional schools. The toughest case may be CLA. The professional schools are connected with the public in many ways, in part because it is a way to raise money. Engaged activities, however, are not always recognized as part of what faculty do--and they should be acknowledged as part of the institutional identity. Professor Fogelman said he does not say all faculty should do things differently; what he says is that faculty should recognize the civic element in what they are doing and value it, be proud of it. He said he was not at the meeting to preach or to tell people what to do. He said he has gone to college forums and been amazed at how much falls under the general rubric of civic engagement. It is more that he is asking faculty to think about what they do.

Professor Savage said that his model is the liberal arts and sciences, which are somewhat detached (e.g., philosophy, literature). When he thinks about what they do in those fields, it is not like political science or economics. So he thinks about the curriculum. There are two models of departments, one that Professor Fogelman stresses and one that he does not--and they do not fit each other. One of the Council on Public Engagement members is from Philosophy, Professor Fogelman responded; some of the effort is curriculum, some is community partnerships, some is public scholarship.

Is this like writing across the curriculum, Professor Bland inquired? It could be, Professor Fogelman said, although he is leery about suggesting more requirements. Those discussions of possible curriculum change are just underway. Some advocate service learning, about which he has reservations: One can do good in the community with service learning that has nothing to do with civic learning. These

discussions are just starting, and just starting across the country. There is a feeling throughout higher education, particularly at research universities, that something is missing--the issue goes to the heart of higher education in a democratic society.

Is there a way to count this, Professor Bland asked? If something is missing, how will the University know when it has gotten it? Professor Fogelman said that Interim Dean Victor Bloomfield is chairing a committee on institutional assessment. Many are concerned about how to assess institutional success; any assessment will be included in the institutional performance annual review. Interim Vice President David Hamilton is interested in civic engagement on the research side of the University, which, again, does not necessarily mean people should do things differently but they should VIEW them differently.

A large part of the job is propaganda, Professor Savage remarked. Communication, Professor Fogelman responded, not propaganda. How do people at the University see themselves and how do they communicate. That will mean a change in the climate of opinion, Professor Savage said. Or one must talk about a cultural change, Professor Fogelman said. This arises from dissatisfaction among faculty themselves about the situation. He repeated that he is not telling people what to do. Professor Savage said he believed he is civically engaged through the curriculum. Philosophy teaches courses in ethics, political and social philosophy, and the philosophical tradition concerned with these issues.

The discussions that are under way could be beneficial to the University and to the public, Professor Fogelman said. No one is not pro-democracy or against helping the public, Professor Bland said; the question is how to operationalize the concepts. Professor Fogelman agreed that this is not simple. Most people say they are pro-democracy; the question is what role the University should play, if one believes the University has a responsibility for strengthening a democratic society.

Professor Fossum said the civic engagement has been helpful to faculty in his department. It is developing a new strategic plan to guide where it should go in the future and what it should emphasize or deemphasize. He is in an applied area, so focusing on civic engagement helps decide strategic directions, capture more funding, and conduct more effective research. The result is a redirection of effort, not new effort.

Professor Zaheer said he had three questions for the Council on Public Engagement: How do they know there is a problem, how will they know when it is solved, and how will the effort be unified across colleges and schools? Professor Fogelman said we know there is declining public support for higher education; President Yudof talked about a renewed social covenant between the University and community, and this effort may be the basis for it. The decline in funding is the most unambiguous indicator and the University must take it seriously. So civic engagement could solve the problem of public support for the University, Professor Zaheer asked? That is worth exploring, Professor Fogelman replied. He has spoken with legislators about the initiative; they in particular are responsive.

Professor Fossum thanked Professor Fogelman for joining the Committee.

2. Post-Tenure Review

Professor Fossum turned next to Executive Vice Provost Jones to lead a discussion of post-tenure review.

Dr. Jones recalled that in 1997 the tenure code revisions called for post-tenure review, which was first implemented in 1999-2000. He and Vice President Carrier report to the Board of Regents and the governance committees on the progress made.

Post-tenure review is a peer-driven process at the department level and is not intended to be entirely new but rather built on the existing promotion and tenure and merit review systems. His office has worked with departments to get the process in place, starting in 1999-2000; there are now two years of data collected. Virtually all colleges (21 of 22) have a post-tenure review system in place; UMD has just begun its process.

Of the tenured faculty, 73% have been involved in post-tenure review. His office only becomes aware of a case when the faculty committee and the department chair decide that performance of a faculty member is less than that expected from the faculty in that unit; only in that case does a different process come into play. Who are the other 27%, Professor Savage asked? The guidelines allow flexibility on conducting post-tenure reviews, Dr. Jones explained; the general suggestion is that it occur annually for all faculty but some units have chosen to do reviews of parts of the faculty on a rotating basis. Each department sets its own guidelines, which must be approved by the college; the institutional guidelines do not require 100% participation of all faculty every year. It will never be 100% in any year, Professor Hendel observed.

Dr. Jones emphasized that the special post-tenure review (for faculty found to have less satisfactory performance than required) includes a special process that gives the faculty member time to improve. Only about 1% of the faculty have been identified as having performance levels below the goals and expectations for the unit; most faculty perform at or above expectations.

The Board of Regents has asked what policy issues emerge from the report, Dr. Jones said. One is whether there is need for a post-tenure review policy when only 1% of the faculty are not performing satisfactorily. It is the administration's view that the policy is needed. The process is not intended to eliminate "dead wood"; it is a human resources development tool to identify people who need assistance in order to ensure they stay productive for the remainder of their career at the University.

A second issue is whether, since this is a human resources policy, department chairs/heads have the funds and training to provide an effective faculty development plan for faculty whose performance is less than satisfactory, Dr. Jones said. The University has told chairs/heads they must do this but it is not clear they have all the tools they need (the University support to improve teaching is good; it is perhaps not as good for helping faculty improve their scholarly work).

One question that came from the Board of Regents was why only 1% of the faculty have been identified as performing unsatisfactorily. Dr. Jones said that he and Vice President Carrier have been involved in the review of promotion and tenure files; knowing the rigor that has gone into the decisions, he told the Regents that the low number is related to the rigorousness of the search process. These are people who are self-motivated for their entire career; there are very few who are not. The Board seemed to be comfortable with this explanation and encouraged everyone to keep up the good work and to retain a rigorous hiring and promotion and tenure process.

There were 18 cases in which the department chair/head found substandard performance; there were 11 cases in which the department committee agreed. When both agree, the faculty development program is initiated. If the chair/head and the committee disagree, there is no finding of substandard performance and no faculty development program--and most faculty would not know of the disagreement.

Would there be cases when the faculty would be terminated, Professor Savage asked? The outcomes of the process were these, Dr. Jones said: Of the 8 faculty who entered a performance improvement plan, 2 had to undergo a subsequent special review (which occurs at the college level); if those individuals are reviewed again and do not meet expectations, the result could be reduction in salary, a redefinition of workload, initiation of removal for cause, and so on--there are about five options.

When one talks about an individual performing at a level below goals and expectations of the unit, are the standards used those when the individual was hired or the current standards of the department, Professor Goldstein asked? One hopes the present standards, Dr. Jones replied; that is why within the post-tenure review process the goal is to try to find a way for an individual to make a contribution to a department. There appears to be some uncertainty, Professor Goldstein said, because in promotion rules, a candidate for full professor can pick which standards will be used. Vice President Carrier clarified that that option exists only for probationary faculty.

If one thinks of post-tenure review as a normal event linked to faculty development, Professor Fossum said, the criteria should not be a problem. As the criteria evolve, a department should be working with faculty on them. In addition, Dr. Jones pointed out, as required by the tenure code, the faculty vote on the criteria to be used in evaluating people for both promotion and tenure and post-tenure review.

How often should faculty in a unit meet to review those criteria and decide if they should be changed, Professor Wells asked? Faculty were obligated to meet once but then the criteria stay forever because departments are not meeting to discuss them. Dr. Jones said he did not think that was happening (that the criteria were frozen); it has been assumed that departments will review the criteria but there is not required or specific period of review. Vice President Carrier said that her office would look at this issue.

Professor Hendel asked if the administration knew anything about the content of the performance improvement plans and whether, for example, they combine issues of teaching, research, and outreach or if they tend to focus on only one. Dr. Jones said they do not track the foci of the plans but it is probably important that they do so; he said they would review them and identify common issues. If one approaches the plans as a human resources tool, Professor Hendel commented, there are resources at the University that can be used to help.

Dr. Jones said he also informed the Board of Regents that after post-tenure review has been in place for four or five years the University would do a more comprehensive review of the process (such reviews are typical for institutions that have instituted post-tenure review). They will send questions to chairs/heads, deans, and others involved asking for an assessment. He said the administration has tried to make this a seamless process, without new documents, but some departments have made it more work.

Professor Wiedmann said the report provided by Dr. Jones was well done--and shows that the process is a waste of time. The time and energy it requires could have been put into teaching and research; the process helped five people but may put more people in need of help. Dr. Jones said he could

understand the concern but pointed out that the process evolved from the tenure debate and represents a compromise between the Regents and the faculty. Moreover, in an age of accountability, this is a part of the University's accountability. A lot of people do not know what is done at the University--many think faculty only teach. There must be a process to document that most faculty are doing their job and doing it well. Nationally, about 95% of faculty are found to perform at or above expectations.

Professor Wells asked about the responsibility of the chair/head. Some tell a faculty member to get more grant funding, which is not helpful. Some people might like to teach more or do something else. Dr. Jones agreed. They have tried to point out that what people do well and are interested in can change as one goes through a career. The policy allows departments make adjustments to accommodate career changes. He said he is concerned that some department chairs/heads may not have the right skill set or will not contact Human Resources to get help in aiding a faculty member to become more productive. One cannot just say "go do it." This may need to be an emphasis in training for new chairs and heads, he concluded.

Professor Fossum thanked Dr. Jones for his report.

3. Governance Policy

Committee members next reviewed the most recent draft of the governance policy, which had been reworked as a result of conversations among members of the Faculty Consultative Committee. The policy lays down procedures and voting rights in departments, Professor Fossum said, and provides that certain decisions are within the exclusive purview of the tenured and tenure-track faculty.

Committee members made a number of suggestions for editorial revision. Professor Bland asked if there would be time for discussion with others; Professor Fossum assured her there would be after FCC had taken action to approve a final draft. Professor Collins asked whether P&A staff would be given the opportunity to review and comment on the draft prior to its going to the Senate; Professor Fossum said they would.

Committee members then voted, with two abstentions, to forward the policy and suggested changes to FCC.

Professor Fossum adjourned the meeting at 4:25.

-- Gary Engstrand