

Minutes*

Faculty Consultative Committee
Thursday, June 18, 2009
10:00 – 12:00
238A Morrill Hall

Present: Emily Hoover (chair), Susan Berry, Nancy Carpenter, Carol Chomsky, Chris Cramer, Shawn Curley, Dan Dahlberg, William Durfee, Janet Fitzakerley, Marti Hope Gonzales, Michael Hancher, Kathryn Hanna, Judith Martin, Michael Oakes, Cathrine Wambach, Becky Yust

Absent: Gary Balas, Caroline Hayes, Brian Isetts, Nelson Rhodus, Martin Sampson

Guests: Provost E. Thomas Sullivan; Senior Vice President Robert Jones

[In these minutes: (1) discussion with Provost Sullivan; (2) committee business; (3) student rating forms and May/summer sessions; (4) discussion with Senior Vice President Jones]

1. Discussion with Provost Sullivan

Professor Hoover convened the meeting at 10:00 and welcomed Provost Sullivan to the meeting, who touched first upon three topics he and Professors Hoover and Durfee had agreed upon.

-- He reported briefly on issues related to the Graduate School and said a report would be coming out next week.

-- He summarized the budget. The University received a base budget cut of about \$155 million, or 11%, for the biennium. The base budget from the state will drop from \$703 to \$627 million; the legislature expected it to be \$677 million in 2011 but the Governor reduced it to \$627 million. (\$703 million minus \$627 million = \$76 million, times two for the biennium = \$152 million, plus a leftover cut of \$3 million from the previous year.) The University will attempt to take about 70% of the reduction through cuts and reallocation (\$95 million); the balance will be covered with tuition adjustments. The President will tell the Regents, however, that about 60% of resident undergraduates will see a DECREASE in tuition; the others will see increases of \$300 and \$450 for 2010 and 2011. The reason for the net decreases is because the University is using \$50 million of federal stimulus money to mitigate tuition increases and create a middle-income scholarship program.

About 1240 faculty and staff positions will be part of the budget cut. There will be 223 faculty and 281 staff positions cut from open positions, 206 RIO (Retirement Incentive Option) positions will not be filled, and there will be 372 staff layoffs, including 158 student employees. Professor Martin recalled that as a result of the strategic-positioning efforts, the University added about 300 new faculty positions; the budget cut appears to take the University back to where it was before. The Provost agreed, noting that there would be a slight net increase in faculty numbers.

* 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.

There is an expectation among the deans that they will be able to make appointments in the second year of the biennium, the Provost related. There is a hiring pause but not a freeze; the University now is hiring at about 35% of its normal rate.

-- Provost Sullivan recalled that he had mentioned at an earlier meeting that he is recommending a pause on student fees until there is a discussion about the policy implications of imposing fees. He is hoping that recommendation will be adopted and he expects to have a conversation with several committees on the topic. It is important the University knows what it is doing with respect to fees, how they align with University goals and strategies, what policies lie behind the increases, that the process be less ad hoc, and consider how the fees are related to tuition (if they are).

Professor Yust asked if the deans have heard back from central administration regarding their proposals for uses of the federal stimulus funds. Provost Sullivan noted again that the University will receive \$89 million in stimulus funds, about \$50 million of which will go for tuition mitigation. The balance will be used for academic unit requests. One policy question is whether to give the money to a few high priorities or to spread the money more evenly across the University; his initial recommendation is to spread it more broadly. They are now looking at the deans' lists but there have been no decisions about the use of the money thus far. Professor Martin asked if it remains true that most of the \$39 million will be used for job preservation and bridging. It is, Provost Sullivan replied, in alignment with the principles that have been established about how the funds can be used: they are to be put into projects that produce new revenue or reduce operating costs.

Professor Durfee commented that the layoffs will be the most painful part of the cuts; he asked the Provost if he had any idea how they would be distributed across academic and administration units. Provost Sullivan said he has asked for the data but does not have them yet. Is it up to the deans to determine whether the 5-8% cuts include layoffs in the colleges, Professor Durfee asked? It is, the Provost said; the decisions are made in the colleges, not in central administration.

Professor Yust asked how many of the RIO vacancies were faculty positions not being filled. Provost Sullivan said he did not have the breakdown of the 206 RIO positions not being filled. He noted that some of them came from central administration, as will some of the staff cuts. Professor Dahlberg asked if the 223 open faculty positions that are not being filled are all at the University and what percentage they are of the total faculty openings. The 223 are positions that are being eliminated, at least temporarily, the Provost responded, but he said they do not know the percentage of all open faculty lines the 223 represent. He pointed out that during the "hiring pause" hiring is occurring and faculty are being recruited.

Professor Wambach asked the Provost if he had a sense whether the new size of the faculty is the right size or if it is too small. She commented that new priorities will drive future hiring, but wondered if there will be adverse consequences from faculty not retiring because the department will not be able to replace the position. Does the situation create a worse incentive—for faculty not to leave? Provost Sullivan said it is an important question, about what the right University incentives are, and events also depend on what happens with the economy. He observed that decisions are being made in departments and colleges and not part of a University-wide institutional strategy on what size the faculty should be; there is need for a thoughtful conversation on this question, but this process was bottom-up, he noted. In terms of the "right" size of the faculty, that is a difficult question. He said he did not know that any university has had that conversation or answered the question because the situation is so dynamic over

time. There needs to be a considered assessment of the consequences of fewer faculty in terms of the implications for the number of courses offered, for class size, for faculty mentoring, for more or fewer TAs, for the student-faculty ratio, for the possibility of more adjunct or contract faculty, and so on, he observed. One cannot have a coherent conversation without considering each of those elements, and only then can one ask if it is possible ascertain the "right" size of the faculty—by college and department.

Professor Berry asked if there is a sense that the University avoided open slots by asking faculty and staff to take pay cuts. Provost Sullivan said he was aware of only one unit where senior administrators were voluntarily reducing their hours to lower costs.

With respect to the right size of the faculty, Professor Hanna said the 223 positions represented about a 5% cut. But student numbers are not going down. She asked if the Provost had any sense of how the colleges will meet their teaching needs. That is an ongoing conversation that must be monitored to see what adjustments are made the second year of the biennium and how the colleges will plan for potentially severe budget problems starting with 2012, Provost Sullivan said. The reductions could affect things like course access, Professor Hanna pointed out. Those discussions are best led by the faculty in colleges and departments, the Provost said.

In his comments about the right size of the faculty, Professor Hancher noted that the Provost had alluded to the impact on the number of adjunct and contract faculty. That was an important issue before the economic crisis, he said, and this Committee was concerned about it. The ratio figure also needs attention. A recent newspaper article said one of the consequences of the University's budget cuts would be an increased reliance on part-time faculty (assuming the reporter interpreted information correctly). He said he would reframe the question to ask what the right ratio of students to faculty is. It is too early to know yet about the possibility of increased use of part-time faculty, Provost Sullivan said. College documents contemplate fewer faculty, larger classes, and more contract/adjunct faculty (but that varies by form of pedagogy and discipline). The federal stimulus funds may be used for contracts for adjunct and contract faculty for courses, so they are being discussed in the colleges. Professor Hancher repeated his view that the use of contract and adjunct faculty was a problem before and said it will need attention when times get better.

Provost Sullivan also pointed out, on the question of the right size of the faculty vis-à-vis the student body (both undergraduate and graduate/professional), that some institutions are cutting graduate program enrollments, as reported in Inside Higher Ed.

Professor Carpenter said she inferred that every unit received instructions to make 5-8% budget cuts. Have all done so? Where do they stand? And are the units then good for the biennium or will there be more cuts? Provost Sullivan said that all documents identifying biennial cuts were due the previous Friday, so the answer is "yes," all units have made proposals. They feel more confident about the first year of the biennium; the numbers for the second year are softer because the state's economy is still in trouble. But the period after 2011 is more of a budget issue than the current biennium.

Professor Fitzakerley asked if the University knew what the impact would be of student enrollment decisions (e.g., choosing to attend a less-expensive institution rather than the University). The Provost pointed out, first, that the University this year had the highest number of applications in its history, about 35,000. Second, undergraduate enrollment is being expanded in some units (CSOM, IT, CBS). Third, it appears that the drop-off between acceptances and admission is substantially less than

had been predicted, so the University may end up with a larger first-year class than it expected. Professor Wambach said she believed there is still nervousness in admissions offices because there is a trend among students to send in deposits to more than one institution to confirm enrollment—and the corresponding concern that students will not decide until the last minute. Students are holding their places longer than they did in the past. The Provost said the evidence here is to the contrary; the "summer burn rate" is less this year, meaning those early deposits are holding firm as good indicators of who will enroll.

Professor Martin asked if anyone has started thinking about what the University may no longer be able to do in coming years, given the apprehension about the next biennium (2012-13). That kind of thinking will be inspired by the committee considering the long-term financing of the University, the Provost said—a committee of which Professor Martin is a member. The first question to be addressed is about the current scope of the mission and whether the University can afford to continue to do as it presently is doing. The committee will issue its report soon and there needs to be a thoughtful conversation about the subject, he said. Given the likelihood that the best the University may be able to do over the long term is hang on to the state funding it now has, Professor Martin said, the question is whether the University will be in a place to do all that it now does. The committee report will start that University-wide conversation, the Provost said, and ultimately the Board of Regents will take it up.

Professor Hoover thanked the Provost for joining the meeting.

2. Committee Business

Professor Durfee took the floor to present Professor Hoover with a gift for her service as chair and thanked her on behalf of the entire Committee for leading it through some extraordinary discussions. Committee members gave her a round of applause. Professor Carpenter thanked her particularly for asking those who sometimes attend the meeting by telephone if they have questions.

Professor Martin next reported on the Regents' annual budget hearing that she and Professors Durfee, Gonzales, and Sampson attended. The hearing is open to anyone, she reported, and typically the Board hears from a number of staff members, particularly representatives of AFSCME. She and Professor Sampson spoke. Most of the comments were thoughtful, she said, and were about the need to preserve staff positions. The students were also supportive of the budget; there were few fireworks, she said. One point that was brought out, Professor Durfee added, is the importance of the University community working together to demonstrate to the state the value of the institution. One can see the dangers if the University becomes divided. 2012 presents such a danger, Professor Hoover observed. The Board members did not ask questions, as this was a hearing, but Professor Durfee said they were extremely attentive to the comments. It is important, Professor Martin concluded, that the Board hear from the faculty as well as others.

Professor Wambach returned to the work of the committee considering the long-term finances of the University. She noted that Vice Provost McMaster is doing an audit of the undergraduate curriculum and the requirements in some fields for so many credits. They are also seeing a number of tiny majors that colleges have allowed and she suggested there should be thought given to the quality of those programs. Do students receive a high-quality major when there are only two students in it? How cost-effective are such small majors?

Committee members expressed reservations about the point. Professor Hoover said it cost very little to offer a major. Professor Hanna said that her college graduates 5-10 Plant Biology majors per year but has a large graduate program in the field and it would be foolish to eliminate the undergraduate major. Professor Hoover agreed and said it is important to look at all levels, including the graduate programs, and said it is important to ask how much it costs to have a major. The number in the major is not the right measure, Professor Hanna added. Professor Yust agreed that the numbers are not the whole story; one must look at the bigger revenue picture, including the number of undergraduates, the number of graduate students, and the faculty who obtain grants.

One issue that he has pointed out before, Professor Curley said, is that systems naturally tend to grow if there are no checks and balances. He and the Committee have been concerned about the administration, which expands to do a number of things, all of which are good ideas. There is need for an external audit to constrain growth. The same is true for the Graduate School, the programs of which have not been audited. It is worth checking the growth in systems. In the case of the growth of programs, however, Professor Yust pointed out, the growth occurs because new fields emerge. At present it is laborious for departments to add something new and innovative—colleges and departments need to be able to do something new for perhaps five years and then re-examine it, but right now every program is established like a pillar of Northrop Auditorium. Professor Martin agreed: the University sets the barriers for programs high—and then keeps them forever.

Professor Hoover reiterated the point that it is not just the number of undergraduate majors. Vice Provost McMaster is concerned about the undergraduate graduation rate, but that should not be the only metric. Professor Wambach posed a hypothetical: What about a program that has six graduate students, four undergraduate majors, the faculty typically teach courses of ten students each, and the large undergraduate courses in the field are taught by adjuncts to bring in revenue? That is a budget issue for the dean, Professors Hoover and Martin pointed out; deans will need to be a lot more attentive to those kinds of numbers, Professor Martin said.

Professor Dahlberg also emphasized a point made earlier. Public support for education is going down everywhere and therefore maybe the best business model is that of private universities. Private universities, however, do not do everything the big University of Minnesota does. It is very difficult to imagine a way for the University to be a top research university and continue to do everything it does now. He reported that a survey of department heads and chairs conducted by the Senate Research Committee found that the number one element the chairs and heads say (by a huge majority) is needed to move up in the rankings is more faculty, but in general faculty numbers in departments are shrinking, most likely due to the decrease in state funding. The University can become mediocre with fewer faculty and larger teaching loads--or does it have the will to decrease what it does and be an outstanding university?

It was noted that not all higher-education dollars in Minnesota are for the University; about half go to MNSCU. One can ask a question about the cost to educate a student in the same area; if it is less costly to do it elsewhere and it is not an emphasis for the University, perhaps MNSCU can provide it. One conundrum for the state is that there is an expectation that no one will live more than 25-30 miles from an institution of higher education, Professor Martin said. The question is whether the state can afford to maintain the number of institutions of higher education it has—that is a huge conversation the state must have, she said.

3. Student Rating Forms and May/Summer Session Courses

At the behest of Vice Provost Carney's office, the Committee took up a proposal to interpret the policy on evaluation of instruction to require that student rating forms be distributed the last week of class during May and summer terms (the current policy language requires distribution during the last two weeks of class, which could be too early in shorter courses). The Committee discussed whether to issue an Interpretation (which it has the authority to do, under Senate bylaws, subject to subsequent approval of the Senate and administration) or adopt an amendment (which it also has the authority to do under Senate bylaws) because this may be more than simply an "interpretation". The Committee finally voted unanimously to issue an Interpretation of the policy for this summer and referred the question to the Committee on Educational Policy in order to determine how best to amend the policy to address several questions that arose during the discussion.

4. Discussion with Senior Vice President Jones

Professor Hoover now welcomed Senior Vice President Jones to the meeting.

Dr. Jones began by providing updates on matters for which his office has oversight or responsibility.

-- Last September the President asked the senior officers to think about getting more efficiency from offices with a goal to reduce the number of administrative positions. In his case, they looked at the planning office and its reporting units. With Associate Vice President Kvavik's upcoming retirement, the President asked him to consider a different leadership structure and to reduce the number of high-level positions while retaining the services. He decided to restructure the function by eliminating the Associate Vice President position and creating an Office of Planning and Analysis headed by a director, Peter Radcliffe (previously in CLA and the Academic Health Center). Dr. Howard, the Director of Institutional Research, is stepping down and Mr. Kellogg is serving as interim director for a year while they reconsider the mission of the office. The Office of Service and Continuous Improvement will remain a unit of new office and will have as its goal continuing its work with colleges and campuses but also assisting in the development of enterprise-wide changes to help the institution become more effective and embrace a continuous-improvement culture. Although the new director will report to him, the work plan of the new office will be established and monitored closely by all three senior vice presidents and others because it is important the unit work effectively with the senior leadership of the institution. The new office will retain the space-management function, which works across the system on space issues and vets decisions about a large number of square footage of new and renovated space. The Office of Measurement Services, which has been in the office for about year, will also remain there. The planning and analysis functions that have existed separately in the Academic Health Center and his office will be merged, Dr. Jones said. The net result is that they will eliminate two positions and transfer one line from the Academic Health Center to the new planning office, with a net savings of about \$350,000.

Professor Carpenter asked if the new officers in the planning and analysis office would visit the coordinate campuses, inasmuch as they have system-wide responsibilities, in order to understand the needs of those campuses. They will, Dr. Jones said, starting next week.

Professor Yust reported that she had recently looked at the new office's website for the capital planning function and found that all the information is from 2005. She suggested it needs to be updated

and cleaned up. Dr. Jones agreed. He also reported that he has agreed to co-chair the Capital Oversight Group.

Professor Yust said it would also be helpful to have a new organizational chart for Senior Vice President Jones' office. Dr. Jones said he would provide one, and added that that he also eliminated one associate vice president position and one assistant vice president position, in addition to the changes in the planning office, in an attempt to reconcile titles with position responsibilities. (Assistant and associate vice presidents are to have system-wide responsibilities.)

Professor Yust said she remained confused about why the academic enterprise of the coordinate campuses report to him rather than to the Provost. Academic responsibilities are core to his position, Dr. Jones told the Committee, and the reason the President wants his office structured the way it is is because he (President Bruininks) encountered a constant challenge when he served as provost: he spent a lot of time on system issues and not enough on Twin Cities issues. When he became president, he felt strongly there needed to be a different structure managing the academic enterprise across the system. As a consequence, he removed oversight responsibilities for the coordinate campuses (except for promotion and tenure and new degree programs) from the provost and put them in his office, Dr. Jones related. The chancellors have a direct reporting line to the President, but they report to Dr. Jones for day-to-day academic, operational, and management issues.

Professor Carpenter said she understood the rationale but "it doesn't work." She said that Dr. Jones serves as director of undergraduate education for the coordinate campuses—but what Vice Provost McMaster does also affects them even though he does not have system-wide responsibilities. Dr. Jones said that while Dr. McMaster does not officially have system responsibilities, it is understood and implied that he is to work with the coordinate campuses on issues related to undergraduate education if there are system-wide implications, and other vice provosts play similar roles. He took issue with Professor Carpenter's statement that the structure does not work, but he agreed that it needs to work better than it has. They are trying to get at the issues with a 1-5-1 approach: one university, five campuses, one degree. His experience suggests the system is working better than it has in the past.

Professor Yust said there could be a third model, where academic programs would report through the provost's office. Dr. Jones said that some parts of the system work well now and some do not, and that academic programs relating to academic degrees and faculty promotion-and-tenure are already under the approval authority of the provost in his role as the University's chief academic officer. There are increased transaction costs and communication gaps that need to be addressed, something he would be glad to talk more about in the future.

Professor Durfee commented that faculty governance is system-wide in that it covers the Twin Cities, Morris, Rochester, and a small part of the Duluth campus. Another discussion could be how well it is working (or not). One could look at program coordination and appropriate faculty input, although not through a committee such as this one. Dr. Jones agreed and said it would have to be at the level of the President's Policy Committee; because there are two unionized campuses, it ends up being a sort of mixed bag on policies. Some policies (particularly those adopted through the Senate) are not applicable to the unionized campuses, but they try to adopt parallel policies—and it is his job to try to get them aligned. It is not clear how one gets around this problem and the question is how to operate an effective higher-education system with some campuses that are unionized and some that are not. And when policies are created, differences create opportunities as well as potential liabilities. Professor Martin suggested that

Dr. Jones consider using the Academy of Distinguished Teachers for assistance because its members come from all campuses. It is not a policy group but it might be able to help.

Professor Chomsky said that while communication is one area that can be improved, another is institutionalizing the evaluation of the impact on coordinate campuses of actions taken by officers, including those whose responsibility encompasses only the Twin Cities campus. Before acting, officers should think about the impact on the coordinate campuses, just as this Committee has learned—with Professor Carpenter's and Fitzakerley's help—to consider that. Dr. Jones agreed that officers with system responsibilities need to avoid framing issues solely for the Twin Cities campus. It will be instructive to see how the 1-5-1 initiative works. He is holding a retreat on July 17 to review many of these issues and is preparing a framing report and a background on paper on the way various higher-education systems work (although there has been little written on the topic). They are working on firming up questions and issues and will look around the country for best practices. One objective will be to think about system responsibilities versus the niche missions of each campus. After Professor Hoover mentioned the Research and Outreach Centers, Dr. Jones agreed that the issues are not just Twin Cities versus coordinate campuses—because the University has statewide resources that are often not connected to each other. They need to think about the state and regions where the University has assets and how they can be used, aligned, and leveraged. This is a complicated issue, Professor Wambach said, and gets at the question of what it means to be a part of the University. Dr. Jones concurred and said it would not be resolved in 6-12 months—but that he expected significant incremental progress and said there will be efficiencies. They have also retained a consultant (a former University staff member) to work with the chancellors, their management team, and staff in the Office of Institutional Research to develop a planning model to simulate financial impacts of various decisions regarding admissions, enrollment, staffing, and tuition that can serve as a management tool for coordinate campuses, something the chancellors have endorsed.

Professor Hanna commended the idea of regional activities and said it would be useful to see a map of the state with ALL of the University's land and facilities. Dr. Jones said he could provide one. The point is to connect the University's assets with its campuses and each other.

Professor Hancher asked what it means to be part of the University. How does that look from the outside? If one looks at the recent US News & World Report rankings, the University of Minnesota is listed simply as the University of Minnesota. Does "University of Minnesota" there mean just the Twin Cities campus? Or is it the whole system? (Several other universities on that list are identified by particular campus.) Dr. Jones said that if one googles a university, sometimes the flagship campus pops up while other times the system pops up. For the most part, when people talk about the University of Minnesota, they mean the Twin Cities—and while the University can't control USN&WR, it can think about how to reconcile the system and how its separate parts work together. Professor Hancher agreed but repeated the point that there remains the question of how it looks from the outside. That is related to trademarks and logos, Dr. Jones said—both how to adhere to the policy as well as to celebrate and support the niche roles of each campus in order to recruit faculty and students.

Senior Vice President Jones said it was his sense that the Committee supported his efforts, even though it is a daunting task, because it would be a mistake to continue the status quo.

Professor Carpenter asked about the status of the Morris campus constitution. Dr. Jones indicated he had seen an early draft but said it was not on his desk at this point awaiting approval; there are some questions that need to be addressed among the provost's office, the Chancellor's office, and his office.

Professor Hoover thanked Senior Vice President Jones for joining the meeting.

Professor Carpenter thanked the Committee for support for issues relevant to the coordinate campuses.

Professor Hoover turned the gavel over to Professor Gonzales and adjourned the meeting at 11:55.

-- Gary Engstrand

University of Minnesota