

Minutes*

Senate Committee on Faculty Affairs
Tuesday, February 28, 2006
2:30 – 4:15
238A Morrill Hall

Present: Morris Kleiner (chair), Arlene Carney, Dann Chapman, A. Saari Csallany, Will Durfee, Janet Ericksen, John Fossum, Patricia Frazier, Darwin Hendel, Theodor Litman, Steven McLoon, Kelly Risbey, Rod Squires, Oriol Valls, Larry Wallace, Timothy Wiedmann, Lori-Anne Williams, Aks Zaheer, Virginia Zuiker

Absent: Carol Carrier, Vladimir Cherkassky, Eric Gupta, Jane Miller, Virginia Zuiker

Guests: Susan Berry, Roberta Humphreys

[In these minutes: (1) Recognition for IRB members; (2) Spousal Hiring Issues; (3) Review of Salary Instructions]

Professor Kleiner convened the meeting at 2:35 pm.

1. Recognition for IRB Members

Professor Kleiner said that the Faculty Consultative Committee had asked SCFA to deal with the issue of service on the Institutional Review Board (IRB), and there not being enough faculty who do so, especially those who use the IRB a lot and thus have a responsibility to serve. He noted that research using human subjects was critical to the University, and he welcomed Professor Susan Berry to speak to the issue.

Professor Berry, current chair of the executive IRB panel, shared some background on the IRB. It is a group constituted as part of a document of assurance (Federal Wide Assurance) that the University of Minnesota will follow rules codified in federal regulations regarding research. In giving an overview of the IRB, Professor Berry noted that the committee is comprised of faculty members, Fairview and Gillette members, and people who are not part of the University (community members). The IRB's role is to protect human subjects and the University IRB has a broad, far-reaching scope as it also serves Gillette, and all of the Fairview system hospitals. There are at least twenty new studies every month, and thousands of active studies. Professor Berry noted that there are four medical panels, two social sciences panels (one of these panels dealing with student projects) and an executive panel than can also do IRB business if required. The committee is supported by University infrastructure but only answers to the Board of Regents. Panel members serve as volunteers and panels review five to ten new proposals at each meeting as well as doing continuing review of ongoing studies, monitoring adverse events, and changes in protocol. There is also an educational component in becoming an IRB member. Professor Berry said that some academic areas use IRB services more and thus should contribute more members to the review board. Most studies are medically oriented and proposed by faculty from the Academic Health Center. Each panel must have members with appropriate expertise to properly assess risk to subjects. She noted that recently new members have been acquired from departments that use IRB services most frequently. It is also necessary to have non-scientific members on every panel as well. Professor Berry

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said that they had discussed ways to reward participation, and that they wanted to have a conversation about how to acknowledge people's efforts as protecting human subjects is a very important responsibility. Professor Kleiner added that SCFA was involved in the matter because it was becoming more difficult for people to serve, and the question was if and how incentives could be offered. Professor Berry added that it was harder and harder to get people to engage in the process and that incentives and rewards are important. The most obvious reward tool, she said, is money. Some departments have set aside money to pay people to participate, and in some cases, the departments have also designated time for faculty to devote to IRB service. Professor McLoon offered that it may be part of a larger problem in that a revenue stream must be shown for faculty's time.

Professor Berry said that IRB service takes significant time and training, and she acknowledged that a lot of time was required. She noted that people were asked to serve three year terms and that it took up to six months for people to be able to review applications comfortably. Professor Wallace asked how much time it took and Professor Berry said that meetings can run 3-4 hours, and that review of materials prior to each meeting can run 2-6 hours. She noted that was a significant amount of time, and that reviewers must know what to look for and must be prepared for meetings. Professor Durfee said that some organizations charge a fee for submitting applications to IRBs, and the fees thus support it. He asked about the possibility of the University trying that approach. Professor Berry said it had been discussed, especially considering pharmaceutical companies involvement in research trials. Ms. Williams asked about other potential models and asked if the IRB was supported by indirect costs. Professor Berry said a flat fee structure might be developed. Professor Wiedmann asked how many applications were approved and how many denied. Professor Berry said that most were approved, because they want research done and so the IRB works with researchers to make it happen. Vice Provost Carney said she had been an IRB member for social sciences, and as a person who generated proposals it was important to serve to understand the method and process of the IRB. There was great value to researchers and principal investigators (PIs) in serving on the IRB. Professor Berry said there was a meeting every week, and there was a large volume of research proposals but that they try not to overload the meeting. They wanted a careful and thorough review. She noted a large problem was when a poor application was received, it would be sent back to the PI to be reworked, and then it must come back to the committee – thus doubling the Board's work. She noted that some IRB members often help faculty prepare their applications. Professor Hendel asked what kind of faculty were serving and Professor Berry said that they were leery of having junior faculty serve because of the time commitment required, but that some do since they are doing clinical research themselves. She said they sought gender balance and balance in expertise. Professor Zaheer asked about schools submitting applications vs. their representation on the IRB. Professor Berry said that certain schools that must use the service should offer members to the committee to ensure better representation. She noted that it had been counterproductive to penalize those who do not have representation, as there may be issues beyond their control. To Professor Durfee's questions, Professor Berry said there is value in having non-scientific members, but that balance was also needed.

Professor McLoon said this should be an indirect cost and that the issue seemed beyond the committee's purview. He noted that it is a financial issue for departments to deal with and people's time should be chargeable as an indirect cost and it should also be part of a tenure requirement. The issue becomes how the committee can get it to be a part of the culture. Professor Wiedmann said that he felt that there is a lot of money generated by research with human subjects, so IRB members should be compensated. Ms. Williams said that there was the opportunity to look at that anew under the new budget model. Professor Kleiner asked if he should tell FCC that the committee looked at the issue and that it was felt that it should be a compensated activity and that colleges should supply money for compensation. Professor Wallace noted another important issue: when it comes time for merit reviews, if one has spent

time on the IRB and lesser time on publications, that can work against a faculty. People need to get appropriate recognition, and it should not be a detriment, but a positive attribute in the promotion and tenure review process.

The committee agreed that the statement to the FCC should encompass the idea that compensation and recognition should be stressed in engaging membership on the IRB panels, that it was integral to the continued functioning of the University and this was not appropriately recognized and should be. Professor Wiedmann suggested communicating the benefits of serving on the IRB. Professor Hendel said that it seemed like there were two needs: specialized expertise and general membership. He said he'd never seen a general call to faculty to serve, and that might be one way to bring people into the process. Professor Berry said that people who'd expressed dissatisfaction with the process were invited to participate in the process. Vice Provost Carney reiterated that some requests are very complex and challenging. Professor Kleiner thanked Professor Berry for the information and said that he would report back to FCC accordingly.

2. Spousal Hiring Issues

Professor Kleiner welcomed Dean Roberta Humphreys to discuss spousal hiring issues. Dean Humphreys distributed information regarding the University of Wisconsin's policy on dual career couples. She said that several years ago, some of the women deans at the University of Minnesota started meeting to discuss various issues. Issues surrounding STEM careers (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) began to emerge and the group began to discuss the complications in spousal hiring, noting that often people come in pairs. In the sciences, Dean Humphreys pointed out, many women marry in the same field. Often, in terms of recruitment and hiring, new hires come in pairs. Dean Humphreys distributed information illustrating statistics around the issue. She said that University of Minnesota does have a policy but it does not address the fundamental issue in what to do when a new hire comes with a partner. Dean Humphreys went on to discuss various issues in the policy, as elucidated in her letter to SCFA. These include department heads and chairs not knowing how to respond or whom to approach when faced with the issue, nor is the policy sufficiently specific about available resources. Further, the burden for negotiating a spousal hire falls primarily to the Dean. In addition, marginal resources are available from Central Administration to assist with bridging funds. Dean Humphreys emphasized that most peer institutions have clear and visible spousal hiring policies, and she felt that the problem at the University had been virtually dismissed. Professor McLoon said he felt it wasn't an issue based on the figures presented, and said that there may not be a formal policy but reasonable people act reasonable. Dean Humphreys reiterated that it was a problem, and cited instances: for example, a candidate had been lost in the math department because her husband couldn't be hired. Another candidate didn't bring up the issue because he was unable to find the policy, and instead went to a college with a clearly stated policy. Professor Zaheer said he felt it was a good initiative, if it is formalizing a de facto policy. The commitment to spousal hiring should be clear and should be supported. Professor Kleiner asked if there was any attempt to link to other colleges in the area as potential places for the spouse, being this was a large metro area. Dean Humphreys said yes, but that wasn't always possible. Ms. Williams asked how the Faculty Culture Task Force was approaching the issue. Vice Provost Carney said that it was part of the family-friendly initiatives but that it was widely recognized as a problem among universities. She pointed out that Michigan was addressing dual career hiring, and, in terms of being competitive, the clearer the policy can be made, the better. Professor Frazier asked if a spousal hire went through the same process but did not come through the normal pool of candidates. Vice Provost Carney said that in many departments the dean would be contacted and the department would decide. There would be a full review through the dean and at department level. Professor Valls said he too felt there was no problem, and that

the numbers actually represented an enormous success, but he did agree that the policy should be clear. Dean Humphreys said that the goal was to represent STEM careers so as to increase diversity at the University. She reiterated that many department heads don't know what to do when the issue arises. Professor McLoon said that he wanted to see a policy that has flexibility, and noted that in four of the last five hires of his department, the spouse had also been hired. It could be troublesome that spousal hires are forced onto other departments, and that academics may be sacrificed for such hires. Dean Humphreys said she'd never seen an instance where it was forced on departments. McLoon added that some departments have not been able to make programmatic hires because they've tried to accommodate spousal hires. Professor Wiedmann noted that the network of available opportunities needed to be expanded, and that the real value was in retention. Once a couple is hired, they cannot move. Vice Provost Carney said that in her experience the faculty cannot be forced to do anything, and more often than not a department is not "mortgaged" for the hire. She cited statistics regarding women in academia, and that a female academician is more likely to be single or a single parent, or single, and it is not just about hiring a couple, it speaks to where academia is headed. Professor Squires said that having a policy in place is a good idea and it also allows non-hired spouse to make connections. An up-front policy can't help but be good. Professor Zaheer pointed out that the numbers do not tell the whole story as they do not indicate who got away. Professor Kleiner asked what assistance Dean Humphreys wanted from SCFA. Dean Humphreys said she would like a consensus from the committee in support of a more visible policy that sits at the level of the provosts' policy, and that indicates there is a process and methodology for spousal hires. She acknowledged that it would have to be consistent with Human Resources policy. Professor Durfee asked who was responsible for policy and said that the committee could send a message to Vice President Carol Carrier regarding the issue. Professor McLoon made a motion to ensure that a specific written hiring policy regarding spousal hires be developed and made high profile. The motion seconded. Motion passed.

3. Review of Salary Instructions

Professor Kleiner asked Vice Provost Arlene Carney to update the committee on two initiatives. Vice Provost Carney noted that she was there on behalf of Vice President Carol Carrier to present the information and she distributed a draft of the memo which outlined principles and strategies of the compensation plan. She highlighted in the document that the average percentage increase to be distributed to base salaries should be at least 3% of faculty and academic personnel base salaries, based on merit calculations. She also cited #3 under Principles to be Observed in the Identification and Distribution of Funds for 2006-2007, which reads: ***A dean, vice president, provost or chancellor may hold a portion of the funds budgeted for salary distribution during the year rather than assigning all funds at the beginning of 2006-2007. Such funds must be distributed no later than October 31, 2006 and are intended to support salary considerations related to current faculty and P&A staff.***

Vice Provost Carney said that one consideration was that in increases in based on a given 'snapshot' do not reflect accurately in the database, depending on timing. She continued to review the list of principles, and reviewed salary plans, including promotional salary increases. She noted that retention offers must be funded by units. In addressing Professor McLoon's questions, Vice Provost Carney said that for merit increases, the faculty's performance must be outstanding, and cited Attachment A, which expounded on competitive P&A plan principles. It also cited the competitive faculty plan principles, both of which described the merit pool of dollars to support strategic positioning implementation through investments in the University's faculty and professional and administrative staff. Vice Provost Carney said that the deans make the case for the merit raise, and that it is distributed at the provost level. Professor Wallace asked if it was widely known to faculty that competitive funds were available. Vice

Provost Carney said she didn't know and that they'd started working on this when she joined the provosts' office last year. She thought a letter had been sent from the dean and distributed to faculty. Professor Squires said that one thing that was glaring to him was the lack of attention to long term inequities built into the system, and he asked if there had been any discussion of that. Vice Provost Carney said that it was easier to persuade legislators in terms of losing star faculty, and that some departments have funds and procedures to address that. Professor Durfee clarified that it is to the dean's discretion to distribute percentages of funds to different departments, and said that it goes to the principle of competitive marketplace. Vice Provost Carney said yes, that it was up to the dean. She said that she saw no substantial changes to the final document to be presented. Professor Kleiner thanked Vice Provost Carney for the informative discussion.

The meeting adjourned at 4 pm.

--Mary Jo Pehl

University of Minnesota