

Minutes\*

**Faculty Consultative Committee**  
**Thursday, October 4, 2007**  
**12:00 – 2:15**  
**N202 Mondale Hall**

Present: Gary Balas (chair), Nancy Carpenter, Shawn Curley, Dan Dahlberg, William Durfee, Marti Hope Gonzales, Lois Heller, Emily Hoover, Jeff Kahn, Judith Martin, Nelson Rhodus, Geoffrey Sirc, Jennifer Windsor, Becky Yust

Absent: Carol Chomsky, Barbara Elliott, Caroline Hayes, Martin Sampson

Guests: President Robert Bruininks

Other: Kathryn Stuckert (Office of the Chief of Staff)

[In these minutes: (1) culture task force; (2) policy approval process; (3) committee business (copyright policy, institutional support to faculty for research, financial support for athletics); (4) discussion with the President]

**1. Culture Task Force**

Professor Balas convened the meeting at 12:10 and asked for reactions to the summary of the University Culture Task Force report. Does it help? Inform? Is it something the Committee should follow up on? He said he was not sure what the report does to move the University forward with its bullet-point one-liners.

Committee members discussed the document. Given its history, and new leadership in University Relations, Professor Balas wondered if the report is almost a "non-document." There does not seem to be real substance in the report that the Committee could follow up on.

The Committee agreed that Professor Adams should be invited to join the Committee again to discuss where he and the task force expected the report to lead.

**2. Policy Approval Process**

Professor Balas reported that he and Professor Hoover had met with Ms. Stuckert to review the policy-approval process being established for administrative policies; he distributed copies of a proposed flow chart. He said he had suggested that Senate policies go through the same process.

Ms. Stuckert explained that the policy-development process has been different for administrative and Senate policies. The development of Senate policies needs to take into account the policy owners, who are responsible for implementing and enforcing the policies. The point is to align development and approval processes and being more thoughtful about whether a policy is needed and its costs.

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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 Balas said he believes Senate policies are effective only if the administration embraces and enforces them. Senate policies should have the same format as other policies and be searchable, and the policy owner should be part of the process. The policies will be stronger if the Senate and its committees partner with the administration in adopting them. [The appropriate administrative officers are already ex officio members of Senate committees so typically participate in the policy-development process.]

Ms. Stuckert confirmed that policy owners are the ones responsible for implementing the policies. Committee members discussed the potential for conflict of interest for policy owners participating in the process and timelines for policy approval. The Committee concluded the possibility of a significant conflict of interest was small and that any timeline problems can be figured out when they arise.

Professor Balas suggested that as has been the case with Regents' policies over the last several years, and will be the case with administrative policies over the next several years, Senate policies should be put on a regular cycle of review.

Professor Yust asked who is responsible for developing procedures associated with the policies; Ms. Stuckert said it is the policy owners.

Part of the process includes a Policy Advisory Committee, which will review proposals early in the development process; that group will include Dr. Engstrand. He will review the existing administrative policies to try to identify which ones would be of interest to the Senate, which would not, and which ones fall in a gray area; Professor Balas said he would bring the ones that fall in the gray area back to this Committee for review.

### **3. Committee Business**

The Committee discussed the science-learning-and-student services building.

The Committee reviewed the amendments to the copyright policy proposed by Professor Wells. Professor Balas said that the copyright committee responsible for drafting the policy should have the responsibility for considering the amendments.

Professor Balas reported that he had had an email exchange with a faculty member whose research equipment was located in the Tandem Accelerator Laboratory, which sits very close to the collapsed 35W bridge. The University has closed the lab because the area will be used to stage reconstruction of the bridge; the faculty member has indicated that this will essentially stop his research unless adequate alternative space is found. The philosophical question, Professor Balas said, is what the University owes to faculty for research; at what level does it owe support? The University hires someone to do very expensive research; what is the University's obligation? He said this is a discussion that should be taken up by the Academic Freedom and Tenure Committee.

The support needed is more than one might believe, Professor Yust commented. When a grant comes in to support research, the investigator needs space, equipment repair, etc., and that is what indirect cost funds are for. This is a big issue, she said. Professor Curley agreed that there is an implicit

agreement to provide space and materials; in this case, there was a loss due to circumstances no one could control.

Professor Balas said that indirect cost funds do not support expensive equipment. When does the University decide not to do something? Professor Rhodus said he has seen a range of support, all the way from none to anything the faculty member needed, and has seen cases where junior faculty are told to sink or swim. There needs to be some kind of policy.

Professor Kane said she did not believe the University was obligated to support research under each and every circumstance and to not do so didn't automatically mean it was about denying someone their academic freedom. Doing so depends on institutional priorities, how good the faculty member's research is, commitments made to the faculty member, and so on, and she was not sure this involves academic freedom unless there is evidence the University is denying support based on objections to someone's line of research. Otherwise the Committee may be going down a slippery slope. It may be the University has no real obligation, Professor Balas agreed, but maintained that the question should be explored. If someone comes and takes a job that carries no support, that person knows it, Professor Curley said. That is different from the case where the research has been supported and the facility is now closed. In the latter case, the University does have an obligation, he said.

Professor Martin reported briefly on the report the Finance and Planning Committee had received on the long-term financial plan for intercollegiate athletics. In the 1990s there was a large University subsidy; President Yudof made a commitment to reduce it to the level of the original Title IX funding for women's athletics from the state legislature. The institutional subsidy has been declining and is at the level planned for. Professor Kane reported that the vast majority of Division I athletic programs do not make a profit and the aspirational goal appears to be promising because the department is projected to pay its bills and not draw more heavily on University funding.

#### **4. Discussion with President Bruininks**

The Committee and the President discussed the science-learning-and-student-services building.

Professor Balas thanked the President for joining the meeting and adjourned it at 2:15.

-- Gary Engstrand