

Minutes\*

**Faculty Consultative Committee  
November 17, 1988**

Present: Mark Brenner (chair), Warren Ibele, Lynnette Mullins, Ronald Phillips, M. Kathleen Price, Burton Shapiro, W. Phillips Shively, Michael Steffes, James VanAlstine

Guests: Professor Robert Bruininks (chair, Senate Research Committee), Acting Provost and Acting Vice President Shirley M. Clark, Acting Vice President William Donohue, Gayle Grika (Footnote), Professor David Hamilton (past chair, Senate Research Committee), Ms. Patricia Mullen, Professor Marcel Richter, Professor Janet Spector

**1. Class Settlement**

The Committee spent about 45 minutes in closed discussion with Acting Vice President and General Counsel Bill Donohue reviewing proposals for the class settlement arising from the pay petitions filed under the Rajender consent decree.

**2. Presidential Search**

Committee members discussed the status of the presidential search and the possible role that the Committee might play in the final events leading to the appointment of the new president. Irrespective of who else might be involved in interviews with the finalists, the Committee felt that the deans should be included.

There was also review of the questions to be addressed to prospective candidates; several changes were suggested and the Committee noted those which it believed were most important (given that it is unlikely there will be sufficient time to put all of them to the candidates).

**3. Status of the "Chief Information Officer"**

Professor Marcel Richter joined the Committee briefly to inquire why SCC had asked that the Norberg committee, in its report on computing, delete any reference to a specific title for the Chief Information Officer (CIO); both the committee on networking on which he had served and the Norberg committee report had called for the CIO to be appointed at the associate vice presidential level. This position, he pointed out, is one that would aid the faculty--it was not being thrust upon them--and the idea was to eliminate steps between the CIO and the Academic Affairs Vice President.

Committee members explained that they agreed with the views Professor Richter expressed and that they had not intended to downplay the importance of the position; they had, however, inadvertently communicated the wrong message. The decision was, rather, an attempt to stem the inflation of vice presidential titles and to permit the new administration maximum flexibility in restructuring the

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responsibilities and titles of the central officers.

The Committee concurred that this was a position of great importance and that whoever occupies it should have direct access to the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

#### **4. The "Minnesota Plan II"**

Professor Janet Spector and Ms. Patricia Mullen joined the Committee for the discussion of the Minnesota Plan II. Professor Spector reviewed the development of the plan, which had included consultation with a group representing the entire system and with the Deans and Directors. The plan also includes the appointment of a Commission on Women, the members of which will be asked to be special consultants on projects and topical areas of inquiry. The areas in which nominees to the Commission expressed interest were wide-ranging.

Committee members raised a question about evaluating department head on the basis of the environment for women in the unit; the consensus appeared to be that this cannot be the only criterion by which department heads are judged. It is, however, mixed up with the more general institutional problem of failing to assess department heads. Professor Spector pointed out that there was a need to find out if the views of the women in the department were at significant variance with those of the men; there would not, she said, be any move toward salary reductions or other sanctions for a while. Committee members also cautioned that the standards which should be used to judge department heads, as well as the measurement devices, had to be considered with care.

Discussion also touched briefly on the following items:

- Where in the University there might be problems which the Commission on Women might address (primarily in units where there are very low numbers of women and in units which are female-dominated and perhaps, thereby, undervalued).
- The extent to which departments have clear expectations (it appears to vary quite widely; women have a particular problem with service demands, especially for service on committees, which tend not to be recognized).
- Curricular restructuring: a cultural pluralism requirement as originally proposed has been removed but faculty development opportunities in this area remains part of the plan. It was suggested that this was an unwise first attempt on the part of Academic Affairs to directly affect curriculum; the reason these ideas were developed was to aid in the recruitment of women, especially of color, by signalling a commitment to these cultures. It is expected that the Commission on Women might introduce topical ideas which could be taken up by the colleges and which they, through their regular procedures, could decide to adopt or use.

As a result of the exchanges, Committee members were informed that the plan would be implemented administratively, that the issue of review of department heads was seen to be beyond the purview of the charge to Professor Spector but that Academic Affairs has begun to attend to it, that the plan is to be considered a working paper, that it would not become the sole basis on which Academic Affairs will operate but rather is intended to sensitize and bring to attention the issues, and that it would

be brought back to the Committee as the administrative plan evolves.

Asked their view of the plan, Committee members variously expressed: appreciation for its sensitivity in implementation, relief that the Commission on Women was not intended to remake the University but rather to generate ideas, and advice that the pursuit of the plan's goals not be seen as a loss/gain proposition for men and women and that it not cause divisiveness when that was not intended. It was also pointed out that the plan seriously slights the responsibility of the faculty themselves; the ambience of life for a faculty members depends primarily on the interactions with colleagues whereas the report looks at the actions of administrators--who are only as good as the faculty.

## **5. Report of the Chair**

Report of the Senior Advisors Committee members agreed that the Report of the Senior Advisors submitted to the Spencer Commission should be made available to all faculty members. [Subsequent to the meeting, it was determined that the expense of reproducing and distributing it far exceeded available resources; the report had been distributed to all academic department heads, who are urged to circulate it among their faculty.]

Support Services Task Force The Task Force, Professor Brenner reported, is all but complete; it has been agreed that its charge would let the task force determine in which areas it would work on the theory that an in-depth study of narrower scope would be more useful than a superficial but broad-scale inquiry.

## **6. Indirect Cost Recovery**

The Committee was joined by Professors Bruininks and Hamilton to discuss the Senate Research Committee (SRC) policy recommendations on Indirect Cost Recovery money. ICR has been a major agenda item for SRC for the past two years; the policy being recommended is to serve as the basis for an agreement with central administration on the distribution of the money.

One major issue is the determination of fixed costs. Historically, fixed costs have consumed about 30% of the ICR dollars. SRC debated about what should be included, and agreed on ORTTA (the question is how to control those costs, rather than whether or not they should be included), environmental protection, Graduate School research, and central administrative support for departmental bookkeeping related to the administration of grants and contracts. SRC is also of the view that the components of fixed cost can be changed, but only after careful discussion (in the past the categories would "change overnight").

The following points were made in the discussion:

- That there appears to be no typical fixed cost formula for research universities; the arrangements vary, in part depending on institutional agreements with their legislatures.
- That it appears the central administration has increasingly used ICR funds for support of the libraries (which, in the view of some, should be supported by the state) and to support other initiatives and that there have been no guidelines in their use; there needs to be

thought given to University needs and principles to govern the decisions.

- There are disparate views on how the funds should be distributed, ranging from all ICR money to be used for fixed costs to a higher percentage going to the principal investigators. The SRC proposal, intended to implement the Senate principles adopted previously, call for a distribution of 30% to fixed costs and the remaining 70% divided equally between central administration (35%) and the college, the department, and the PI (1/3 of the remaining 35% to each).
- That in instances where the departments do not receive ICR money, the problem is with the colleges, not with the University; the amount and distribution of ICR monies between the colleges and their departments is established at the college level, which is intended to allow flexibility.
- That SRC should add to its report, when this item is presented to the Senate, a reminder that there should be an annual accounting to the Senate Finance Committee on the distribution of ICR funds.
- That this proposal was developed in consultation with the central administration so that it would be accepted if the Senate adopted it.
- That certain units receive all or a large part of their direct costs back; these arrangements are negotiated. SRC is of the view that if a unit receives no 0100 funds it is acceptable for these units to receive their direct costs at a fixed rate and for a fixed term--but not indefinitely. The arrangements should be reviewed on some periodic basis.

Professor Bruininks summarized by noting that there are a lot of viewpoints on how these modest dollars should be spent; the SRC recommendations are an attempt to develop principles, agree on fixed costs, and identify where responsibility for implementing them lies. It is important, he said, to have some guidelines in order to promote good management and to save the SRC from having to spend half-time each year revisiting the issue.

The Committee concurred; Professor Brenner promised that the SRC proposal would be on the docket of the February Senate meeting.

The Committee adjourned at 3:00.

-- Gary Engstrand

University of Minnesota