

1998-99 UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA (No. 2)
STUDENT SENATE MINUTES
DECEMBER 3, 1998

The second meeting of the Student Senate for 1998-99 was convened in 165 Peik Hall, Minneapolis campus, on Thursday, December 3, 1998, at 1:00 a.m. Coordinate campuses were linked by ITV. Checking or signing the roll as present were 29 voting student members, 2 ex officio members, and 2 non-members. Mr. Jesse Berglund, Student Senate Chair, presided.

I. APPROVAL OF AGENDA
Action

APPROVED

II. MINUTES FOR OCTOBER 15, 1998
Action

The Student Senate minutes are available on the Web at the following URL:

http://www1.umn.edu/usenate/student_senate/stu101598.html

APPROVED

III. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Jesse Berglund, Student Senate Chair, announced that since this meeting is by ITV, people who wish to speak, need to do so into the microphones.

Britta Ylikoppsa, a senator, encouraged every senator to attend their respective board meetings.

IV. TUITION BANDING
Discussion with Vice President Peter Zetterberg

Dr. Peter Zetterberg thanked the Student Senate for being invited. He said that when setting a tuition plan for a typical year, the University is interested in what the average increase will be. This is not the major issue for the University this year. Instead, it is structuring tuition to support a change from quarters to semesters. He then distributed a handout, which is a report that was given to the Board of Regents Finance Committee in November.

With the change to semesters, there is a real threat that student success measures, such as first year retention and graduation rates, will be reversed from the upward trend over the last 10 years. There is also a danger that the University will lose a significant amount of tuition revenue.

The main concern is that students will continue to take the same number of courses as they are currently taking. Because the curriculum under semesters will have more three credit courses, average student credit loads may decrease from 12-16 credits per quarter to 9-12 per semester. If

students want to graduate on time, they cannot afford to take a lighter load for even one semester. He then highlighted one of the slides presented in the handout dealing with the arithmetic of semester conversion.

One option for the University is tuition banding to encourage students to keep their credit loads at current levels. A tuition band is a range of credits where tuition stays the same. Banding is currently in place for graduate, professional, and MBA students. The only segment not included is undergraduates. The current incentive for undergraduates is to charge a base tuition of \$62.00 before registering for the first credit, and then assess per credit tuition. The proposal is to lower the base tuition and then provide a band at the upper level, which would be more visible to students.

He said that a tuition plan will be presented to the Board of Regents in February and approved in March. The University wants to finalize a financial incentive early to be able to advertise it to the students before they register for fall semester.

He concluded by saying that this tuition plan is only for the Twin Cities campus. The coordinate campuses will need to decide independently what they want to do. He then opened the floor for questions.

Q: How will tuition banding effect the penalty that upper division students pay for 3000-level classes?

A: The difference between upper and lower division tuition will be eliminated next year.

V. APPROVAL OF TUITION RESOLUTION Action

MOTION:

To approve the following Resolution:

RESOLUTION ON TUITION

WHEREAS the Regents will approve the rates of tuition for the 1999-2000 academic year in March, and

WHEREAS the Administration plans to equalize upper and lower division tuition levels in this increase, and

WHEREAS President Yudof has proposed an average 3% tuition increase for the 1999-2000 academic year, and

WHEREAS this proposal is much more modest than the University of Minnesota's average increases over the last fifteen years, which have accounted for a composite 172% increase since 1983, and

WHEREAS President Yudof has promised a larger "basket of goods" in the University's biennial legislative request, which will benefit all students, and

WHEREAS the University's position will improve with unity behind its biennial legislative request,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the University of Minnesota Student Senate supports the Administration's proposal for an average 3% tuition increase for the 1999-2000 academic year, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the University of Minnesota Student Senate advocates for the Administration to increase financial aid to account for this increase to students in need.

**BRITTA YLIKOPSA
CLA SENATOR**

DISCUSSION:

Britta Ylikopsa, a senator and the author of the resolution, stated that this resolution has partially come from the resolution that was passed by MSA stating that they would not accept anything over a 2% tuition increase. Several students felt that this was a non-negotiable position and did not encourage administrative cooperation. The proposed increase of 3% does not effect upper division students. She then opened the floor for questions.

Q: By accepting this average tuition increase, do you feel that this sets a precedent for future raises?

A: No, since this is the lowest tuition increase proposed by the University and is lower than the current rate of inflation. For the past 15 years, tuition has increased 172%.

Several coordinate campus members stated the this seems to be a good plan since it is below the current rate of inflation.

Q: When the resolution refers to "average tuition increases," is it assumed that this is undergraduate tuition?

A: The graduate and professionals schools are treated separately according to the administration, since tuition for these schools fluctuates with the market.

In light of this information, it was suggested that the wording be changed to "average undergraduate 3% tuition increase" in the Therefore statement.

This was accepted as a friendly amendment

Q: What are the specifics being proposed by the President in his larger "basket of goods"?

A: These include an increase in professor salaries to encourage professor to come and stay at the University, renovated classrooms, more freshmen seminars, continuation of new student Convocation, and the PeopleSoft project.

Q: What is the current rate of inflation?

A: 2.5% currently.

Q: What is the price difference between upper and lower division credits?

A: Currently, 1000-level classes are \$84 per credit and 3000-level classes are \$90.00 per credit.

Q: Why was it stated that a 3% increase would be below the rate of inflation if inflation is only 2.5%?

A: I was given a different number than the 2.5%, since it not a constant figure and there are other ways to measure it. Even with this new number, .5% is still drastically less than what it has been in previous years.

Q: How does the 2.5% figure compare to other comparable institutions?

A: The *Minnesota Daily* published an article that compared the cost of tuition at the Twin Cities with other Big Ten institutions. The University ranked third lowest on this list. Other schools have also reported approximately a 5% increase this year.

A senator made an amendment to replace "3%" with "the current rate of inflation as designated by an appropriate US. Government agency."

This was not accepted as a friendly amendment.

A motion was then made to suspend the rules to allow consideration of this amendment. This motion failed with 17 opposed and 9 in favor.

A second motion was then made and seconded to table the resolution until more data and statistics can be presented.

A senator spoke in favor of the motion to table on the grounds that information from the *Minnesota Daily* is not adequate enough to support a resolution regarding a tuition increase.

A senator then spoke against the motion to table by stating that the administration has already decided on a 3% tuition increase. The purpose of this resolution is to support the administration in the lowest increase in the last 15 years. The tuition proposal will be presented to the Board of Regents in January, so it would be too late to table this resolution until February. Instead, a special meeting would need to be called at the beginning of January.

Another senator, in support of the motion to table, stated that the December meeting was also a special meeting. It is the purpose of the Senate to think through all issues, especially tuition since it affects every student on each campus.

A senator, opposed to tabling the motion, said that the resolution states that the Student Senate supports this increase only for the 1999-2000 academic year. If the Student Senate waits, and chooses not to support the administration, then the Senate will have a weaker position with the administration.

With the time to debate the motion expired, a vote was taken and the motion to table the resolution failed.

A vote was then taken on the original motion as amended and was approved with 25 in favor, 2 opposed, and 2 abstentions.

APPROVED

VI. CONSTITUTIONAL REVIEW SUBCOMMITTEE REFORMATION

Discussion

Jesse Berglund, Student Senate Chair, said that last year a constitutional review subcommittee was formed, but was not active since the spring. The Student Senate Consultative Committee (SSCC) is forwarding a motion to reform this subcommittee. Membership will be solicited from the Student Senate and a member of SSCC will chair the subcommittee. He then opened the floor for input from senators as to the formation and duties of the subcommittee.

A senator, who was a member of the subcommittee last year, stated that a more structured setting would help the subcommittee.

Another senator suggested that the relationship of senators to their college assemblies and boards should also be discussed.

VII. CAMPUS REPORTS

Kelli Rusch, the Crookston SSCC representative, reported that this weekend the student forum had a retreat on the Duluth campus.

Deanne Nordberg, the Student Senate Vice Chair from Morris, said that its main issue is housing since the standards in Morris are set low. The Morris Campus Student Assembly (MCSA) is tackling this problem in conjunction with the city council. The construction of the new Science Building is two weeks ahead of schedule.

Mark Uszenski, the Duluth SSCC representative, stated that Duluth will be welcoming the Crookston forum this weekend. The administration was proposing a laptop initiative in which students would lease a computer for \$500 per semester. Students were against the proposal, so

this sentiment was presented to the Board of Regents. The project has now been put on hold for this year.

Ben Bowman, an MSA representative, said that the Fees Committee slate has been passed and forwarded to GAPSAs. A tuition resolution was also passed. The forum has met with a student who is designing a teacher evaluation website independent of the University. Projects have also been started regarding renter's rights.

Cheryl Jorgensen, the president of GAPSAs, reported that at the December 7 meeting, she will be presenting the agenda for the year. One issue to work on is the biennial request.

Jesse Berglund then congratulated Cheryl Jorgensen on being elected GAPSAs President, and the Student Senate gave her a round of applause.

VIII. STUDENT SENATE CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

Ryan Falk, chair of the Student Senate Consultative Committee (SSCC), said that SSCC is working on the semester conversion, tuition banding, the UPass, parking and transportation, and improving relationships with the campus assemblies.

IX. STUDENT SENATE CHAIR REPORT

Jesse Berglund, Student Senate Chair, congratulated the senators on their attendance at this meeting.

X. OLD BUSINESS

NONE

XI. NEW BUSINESS

Cheryl Jorgensen, president of the SLC, reported that a Jesse Rally will be held on January 5 in Coffman Union. Further details will be available in the *Minnesota Daily*. Second, SLC is working in conjunction with the coordinate campuses to organize two types of lobbying in favor of the biennial budget request. One is a letter writing campaign and the other is lobby days for each campus and constituency represented in the request. SLC is also monitoring the regent selection process, and considering developing an information packet on each candidate.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 1:55 p.m.

**Rebecca Hippert
Abstractor**