

2000-01 UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA (No. 1)

**STUDENT SENATE MINUTES
OCTOBER 19, 2000**

The first meeting of the Student Senate for 2000-01 was convened in 25 Law Building, Minneapolis campus, on Thursday, October 19, 2000, at 11:35 a.m. Coordinate campuses were linked by telephone. Checking or signing the roll as present were 29 voting student members and 2 ex officio members. Mr. Percy Chaby presided.

1. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Percy Chaby reminded student senators that Student Senate handbooks are available. He then asked all student senators to stand and use the microphones so that the coordinate campus senators can hear the discussion.

2. STUDENT SENATE CHAIR REPORT

Percy Chaby, Student Senate Chair, noted that a list of issues for this year has been compiled and will be e-mailed to all student senators so that the issues can be ranked and any new items can be added. He stated that the retreat went well but that attendance could have been higher.

3. STUDENT SENATE CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE CHAIR REPORT

Jason Reed, Student Senate Consultative Committee (SSCC) Chair, went through a list of issues that the SSCC has been dealing with this year. The first issue is health care for University employees. A Health Plan Task Force was established in 1997 by the faculty and staff to look at health care costs. The task force is now determining whether the University should continue with the state for its health care or separate and offer its own plans. This issue will be discussed at the November Student Senate meeting.

A second issue is the fall semester due date for grades. The Faculty Consultative Committee (FCC) asked the Senate Committee on Educational Policy (SCEP) to look at extending the 72-hour deadline until the week before spring semester starts. The SSCC has felt that this is not enough time to allow students to plan their spring semester class schedule.

A third issue is the six-year capital request, which will be presented to the SSCC in November. Every two years the University asks the state for funds for new buildings or building renovations. This plan ranks all the University projects for the next six years.

The last issue is the Policy on the Use of Class Notes for Commercial Purposes. Last year, SCEP brought this policy to the University Senate. The policy prohibited publishing notes on the web or sharing them with students other than classmates. At the last SSCC, a discussion was held with President Yudof regarding the students' concerns with this policy. He seemed receptive to the issue and said that he would discuss changes to the policy with the FCC.

Q: What enforcement is present for the current 72-hour deadline?

A: Past enforcement has been lax, so the University should look for ways to make this timeline stricter. Last year the deadline was extended for an additional week, but no more grades were turned in during this longer period.

Q: When the SSCC met with the President regarding the class notes policy, what was his reaction to the students' concerns?

A: The President agreed with the students' concerns but said that he would see what he could do to work on these changes with the faculty.

Q: What are the faculty's concerns in regards to this policy?

A: Faculty want to have their intellectual property and hard work protected. Faculty realize that the Internet is global and that their ideas can reach many more people, so it is a great concern for them. They are also concerned with students profiting from taking notes.

Q: Has the SSCC heard from the President since the last meeting?

A: No.

Q: Does the 72-hour grade deadline include weekends?

A: The 72-hour deadline is measured in business days, not weekends or holidays.

Q: From the SSCC perspectives, are there any alternatives to the 72-hour deadline?

A: No.

4. CAMPUS REPORTS

Crookston - No report

Duluth - Amber Benning reported that Governor Ventura was on campus Tuesday for a leadership meeting with 200 student leaders. Later, over 1000 students were present to hear his speech.

Morris - Prince Amattoe stated that the Regents met in Morris in September at which time Samuel Schuman was inducted as the new chancellor.

Graduate and Professional Student Association - Phillip Cole noted that GAPSA is following the student service fees process, health care, graduate school compensation, and affordable housing.

Minnesota Student Association - Jason Reed said that MSA has approved the fees selectors. Light rail transit is also being discussed since students would like it to be an option for the St. Paul Campus. Debates are also being held for the upcoming elections.

5. STUDENT SERVICE FEES TASK FORCE UPDATE

Paul Enever, Chair of the Student Service Fees Task Force, said that the task force has been meeting this semester as the result of issues from last year's process, notably the Supreme Court's ruling on the Wisconsin lawsuit. The task force has wide representation from each of the campuses. The task force will address all concerns with the fees process, including viewpoint neutrality. To reach all students, a web site will be established for submitting comments.

6. ELECTION OF THE STUDENT SENATE/STUDENT SENATE CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE VICE CHAIR

Action

Tim Dunn, the Morris SSCC representative, was elected Student Senate/Student Senate Consultative Committee Vice Chair for 2000-01.

7. UNIVERSITY SENATE BYLAWS AMENDMENT

Senate Committee on Equity, Access, and Diversity

Discussion by the Student Senate

MOTION:

The following amendments to Article III of the bylaws, creating a new Senate Committee on Equity, Access, and Diversity, and abolishing to replace the existing committee (Equal Employment Opportunity for Women) and to broaden its charge will be presented for action at the November 16 University Senate meeting.

New language is underlined; language to be deleted is ~~struck out~~. (Existing bylaws will be renumbered appropriately if this amendment is approved.)

6. EQUITY, ACCESS, AND DIVERSITY COMMITTEE

Membership

The Equity, Access & Diversity Committee shall be composed of at least 7 faculty members, 2 professional and academic staff members, 2 civil service staff members, 6 students, and ex officio representation as specified by vote of the Senate. Each coordinate campus shall have at least 2 representatives. Members should reflect the racial and ethnic diversity of the campus. Campuses are encouraged to maintain or develop campus committees on related issues. The committee may form standing or temporary subcommittees or task forces on specific issues as appropriate.

Duties and Responsibilities

- a. To advise the president and administrative offices on the impact of University policies, programs and services on equal opportunity, affirmative action and diversity from a system perspective.
- b. To promote compliance among the University community with equal opportunity, affirmative action and diversity laws and policies relating to students and staff.
- c. To review policies, programs and services related to equal opportunity for and the diversity of students and employees, and recommend any changes.
- d. To bring concerns to the Senate, as appropriate.
- e. To recommend to the Senate Consultative Committee such actions or policies as it deems appropriate.
- f. To submit an annual report to the Senate.
- g. The role and performance of the Equity, Access, and Diversity Committee will be reviewed during the 2002-2003 academic year, with a special emphasis on the extent to which the work of the existing Committee on Equal Opportunity for Women has been carried forward.

COMMENT:

This modified motion accommodates the concerns expressed by members of the Senate in the Spring of 2000. At that time the task force proposed a consolidation of the EEOWC and Disabilities committees, with an expanded charge. The Senate clearly expressed the view that the Disabilities Committee should remain separate. This draft deals with that concern. The original rationale for a broadly based committee to deal with access, diversity, and equity remains valid. The relevant portions of the task force's recommendation from last year are reprinted below. Although our rationale remains the same this year, in essence we are talking about expanding the charge and scope of EEOWC and creating a new committee that addresses issues of relevance to a number of groups, including women.

Rationale for the creation of a Senate Committee on Access, Diversity, and Equity

The Vision

The University Senate is committed to diversity among faculty, students, and staff and sees this as a common good. We seek to build a community that actively opposes discrimination, that welcomes and celebrates differences of identity and of viewpoint, and that is fully accessible. The journey toward such goals will be greatly enhanced by a strong Senate voice which is committed to this vision and which builds lively links to the many communities touched by it. We believe it is essential to have a committee within our structure charged with furthering this vision of equity, diversity, and access. Only such a committee will allow us to fulfill our responsibilities to provide a faculty voice in support of this vision within a system of shared governance.

Numerous Senate committees and groups have come and gone over the years, each of which addressed portions of this concern. There are, moreover, numerous advocacy groups, offices, and departments within the university that speak for these groups and that are available for consultation. Two of them are Senate Committees that have created models of advocacy on which this proposal builds. The Senate Committee on Equal Opportunity for Women - created in response to the Rajender Class Action Settlement - has a long and honorable history of advancing the interests of women on campus. As a result of their efforts, women are far more numerous, more visible as leaders, and more equitably paid than they were 25 years ago. In addition, temporary committees, such as the GLBT subcommittee of the Social Concerns Committee have performed specific tasks and then faded from existence. On the other hand, the Senate has no body that is charged with consultation on issues of racial discrimination, the promotion of racial and ethnic diversity, or concerns related to sexual orientation.

Therefore, we propose the creation of a Senate Committee on Access, Diversity, and Equity in order to provide for consultative participation on the full breadth of diversity and equal opportunity issues affecting faculty, students, and staff at the University of Minnesota. Our proposal would replace the two existing committees with a single committee that has a broader charge. This committee will be empowered to create subcommittees or task forces on an as needed basis to work on specific issues that may arise or in behalf of specific constituencies that might feel the need for a distinctive voice.

Why now?

1. It is simply not tolerable to have such important concerns unaddressed by any Senate committee.
2. Furthermore, neither of the administrators charged with responsibility for these issues (Rusty Barcelo, Associate Vice President for Multicultural Affairs, and Julie Sweitzer, Director of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action) has a clearly delineated consultative body linked to the Senate. EEOWC has tried valiantly to fill this role, but its charge is far narrower than the responsibilities that these administrators bear.
3. We need to coordinate our work in a way that recognizes the intersection of identities and interests, and that creates a strong voice to consult directly and clearly with the administration on the full range of issues regarding diversity, equal opportunity, and access. This effort would underscore the University-wide responsibility for these issues.
4. As we enter the 21st century we also note that conditions today are considerably different than they were 30-40 years ago and solutions must be framed in response to new realities. The proliferation of constituency based groups, departments and programs, resource centers, and the like signal new positions within the University. The committee we propose would not replicate these groups, but instead would reach out to them and provide an environment in which to find the areas of common ground and overlapping interests.
5. It would also be built on the recognition that most individuals have multiple, overlapping identities.

6. We believe that it is essential to recognize the importance of working together within a broad vision and building on the strengths that would have been unimaginable only three decades ago.

The new committee should include members of the current committee that will be dissolved.

FRED MORRISON, Chair
SENATE CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

DISCUSSION:

Jason Reed, Student Senate Consultative Committee (SSCC) Chair, noted that last April a motion was brought to the University Senate to replace the Disabilities Issues and Equal Employment Opportunity for Women Committees with one diversity committee. The motion failed because some people felt that disability issues would be lost in the greater scope of this new committee.

Therefore, the new motion is to just replace the Equal Employment Opportunity for Women Committee with an Equity, Access, and Diversity Committee. The bylaws are being presented here for information, but will be presented for action at the November University Senate meeting.

The proposed committee calls for six student representatives including at least one student from each coordinate campus.

8. COFFMAN UNION RENOVATION UPDATE

Discussion

Robert Jones, Interim Vice President for Student Development, addressed the issue of Coffman renovations by noting that legal issues regarding the bid contract at this time prevent full disclosure. Once these contractual issues are resolved, more information will be made available.

At this time, the University has met with the architectural firm and the University's budget people to look at what is required to get this project back on track and finished as soon as possible. Until the contractual issues are finalized, the project cannot be rebid and a solid timeline is not possible.

The main impact on this project has been that the initial bids were higher than expected because of the high construction demand. It has been noted that the construction climate throughout the area has been the main impact on this project, and others at the University.

Q: Is this project unique in that construction has already been done to the building which makes it unusable?

A: Many University remodeling projections involve relocation of building occupants. Many people have been asking why the building was closed before the contract was finalized. The answer is that abatement work needed to be done in preparation for the construction. One thing

that delayed renovation is that there was no response to the initial request for bids because all the construction companies have been so busy.

Q: What does BAT stands for?

A: BAT stands for the Building Advisory Team. It is a group of representatives from across campus, including students, who have looked at all the specifications of this project.

Q: Was the BAT responsible for the decision on how to renovate Coffman?

A: Yes, in conjunction with Facilities Management and consultants.

Q: How will the renovation now be funded?

A: All scenarios are being explored, such as a design-build scenario or a redesign to fit the budget. The University does not want to jeopardize any future programming to fit a budget.

Q: How much more money is needed to complete the renovations and will this additional funding be asked for from students?

A: The University will not ask the students for more funding. Delayed or phased-in student fee increases are also being looked at so that current students are not paying for something that they will not have a chance to use. Private funding sources and voluntary faculty and staff contributions are also being considered.

Q: Is it possible that only vital areas will be finished and other areas will be framed-in for later completion?

A: This is a possibility as well as looking for private donors to finish certain areas of the building.

Q: Was demolition of the building and starting from scratch a consideration?

A: This issue was raised early in the process but it was not deemed cost effective. The University has a commitment to restore historic buildings. Students were also not interested in this option.

Q: What is the revised timeline?

A: The hope is to finish the contractual issues within the next month and then consider a rebid. Project completion will be pushed back, but there is no definite date yet.

A senator said that students are concerned with the project cost and the survival of student organizations. The decision to approve abatement first should also be reviewed in terms of accountability. Also, if the President is committed to renovating historical buildings, then where is the funding to back up these words?

Q: How did the BAT know that the project would be on budget?

A: There was consultation between the University and the architectural firm which determined the cost for the project based on what renovations were needed.

Q: Will there be space in Coffman to lease to private companies?

A: Students are concerned with Coffman looking like a mall if too many corporate entities are brought in.

A motion was then made and seconded to extend the time for discussion 10 minutes. The motion was approved.

Q: What avenues are available for student input? How will students be informed?

A: Open forums with student organizations will continue once more detailed information is available and then until the completion of the project. Publicizing of the forums will be done as widely as possible. Student input has been included since the beginning of this project. Student leaders are key to soliciting a wide range of student participation in the project. There cannot be an adversarial relationship between students and the administration since cooperation is needed to complete this project to the satisfaction of both sides.

9. OLD BUSINESS
NONE

10. NEW BUSINESS

NONE

11. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 1:09 p.m.

Rebecca Hippert
Abstractor