

Minutes*

**Senate Committee on Educational Policy
Wednesday, October 20, 2010
2:00 – 4:00
238A Morrill Hall**

Present: Thomas Brothen (chair), Norman Chervany, Robert McMaster, Kristen Nelson, Alon McCormick, Peh Ng, Jane Phillips, Henning Schroeder, Paul Siliciano, Donna Spannaus-Martin, Elaine Tarone, Cathrine Wambach

Absent: Barbara Brandt, Cody Mikl, Peggy Root, Michael Wade

Guests: Professor Nita Krevans

Other: Suzanne Bardouche (Office of the Vice Provost and Dean for Undergraduate Education); Tina Falkner (Academic Support Resources)

[In these minutes: (1) update on the Enrollment-Management Committee; (2) report on liberal-education courses; (3) proposed policy on appointments to graduate examining committees]

1. Update on the Enrollment-Management Committee

Professor Brothen convened the meeting at 2:05 and turned to Vice Provosts McMaster and Schroeder to provide an update on the work of the Enrollment-Management Committee (E-M committee). [Email messages prior to the meeting confirmed that the work of the committee is limited to the Twin Cities campus.]

Vice Provost McMaster reported that they are still in the process of gathering data. They began work at the end of the summer; this Committee has seen the charge letter with a long list of items. The work started with general concerns about enrollment management. Since they began, the E-M committee has evolved—at the request of the Provost—to look at the scope and mission of the campus: They should look at priorities and where the University should make investments, in addition to looking strictly at the numbers. They have divided themselves into three subcommittees (undergraduate students, graduate students, and professional students) and have been meeting with every dean about recent enrollment trends and future potential growth in undergraduate, graduate, and professional student numbers, as appropriate, and are receiving very interesting feedback. Their plan is to provide the Board of Regents with a preliminary update (not a report) soon and a final report by late spring.

Vice Provost McMaster then reported on the activities of the E-M committee with respect to undergraduates. The subcommittee on undergraduates includes as members Associate Dean Bob Reukert (Chair), Professor Will Durfee, Associate Dean Jennifer Windsor (CLA), Ron Matross, and undergraduate student Paul Strain. The subcommittee has been considering several issues.

* 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.

-- Does the campus have the appropriate mix of freshmen and transfer students? There is a strong sense that there is need for a better enrollment plan for transfer students, especially in the larger colleges.

-- What effect will increased retention and graduation rates have on total enrollment?

-- What are the long-term goals and metrics with respect to high-school rank, ACT scores, etc? The average ACT score for the campus is now 27.2 and the high-school rank is 85.2%. All these measures are going up.

-- What are the pressure points in the undergraduate curriculum, were enrollment to be increased?

-- If there is an increased number of undergraduates, what impact would that have on residence capacity? The Marcy-Holmes neighborhood is every concerned about the impact of increased enrollment on the neighborhoods.

In early spring, they will have definite recommendations, Dr. McMaster concluded.

Vice Provost Schroeder reported that the subcommittee on graduate students includes Professors John Sullivan, Kate VandenBosch, and Cathy Wambach, and Ph.D. student Mandy Stahre as well as Brad Bostrom; they are trying to define a set of possible metrics that measure the quality of graduate programs/graduate education. They will look at the NRC variables in three categories (research productivity, student services and outcomes, and diversity) and evaluate whether those would be useful metrics.

One conclusion they have reached is that the NRC study and other conventional measures are input measures (e.g., the GRE predicts how well a student will do, not if he or she will generate new knowledge or become a successful researcher). They are trying to identify metrics that look at the value added to student while they are in the program, not only at the incoming GRE scores, not just at faculty reputation and research productivity: What happened to the student in the program? At what point in their program are they visible as early-career researchers/scholars? One way they are approaching that is to invite a number of Directors of Graduate Study from across disciplines to talk about ideas about which metrics best reflect program accomplishments.

The committee has also considered the instruction of graduate students: How it is done and can be done, and how it is done in professional schools. They tend to have smaller classes and using e-learning and technology goes away in favor of a more traditional format. The Medical School, Pharmacy, and the School of Nursing are using e-learning and technology; they are used far less in graduate education. The University measures faculty productivity by an industrial model, counting the number of students taught or credits generated. There needs to be a new way to measure the work that faculty members do, not just count the number of students or credits, Dean Schroeder said.

A related matter, Dean Schroeder said, is the cost of graduate students. The first meeting of the task force on financing graduate education will meet the day after this Committee meeting and will begin to address the question of how to bill and pay for graduate education. Some programs in the

health sciences and elsewhere rely more on postdocs because they are cheaper and can do research from day one, and graduate students are not fully covered by NIH funding.

Professor Tarone inquired if limits on graduate admissions have played into the discussions. They will take that up tomorrow, Dean Schroeder said. The Graduate School had no active role in controlling admissions numbers; that will be taken up by the deans, working with the programs. Is there a question? Professor Tarone said that a number of graduate programs have been told that they cannot admit more than X graduate students per year. The policy varies by college, Dr. McMaster said. In some colleges graduate enrollment decisions are centralized and the dean decides on the number in each program; in others each department decides.

The question is what metric should be used to make the decision, Professor Wambach said. The ideal faculty-student ratio? The amount of support that can be offered? The number of professorial positions and employment opportunities that exist? There are many metrics that could be considered. Dean Schroeder related the content of a conversation with a CLA faculty member to the effect that in the past, departments would get as many students as possible with the dollars available, and that there has been a shift to creating more competitive packages, which could mean fewer students. Are they going for rankings, but getting the best graduate students, Professor Tarone asked? They are not, Dr. Schroeder said; if they cannot offer a competitive financial package at the outset, they are not able to lure students who may have other offers. Even programs that have a lot of job opportunities and good support for graduate students are being told to limit their admissions, Professor Tarone said. She said she did not know how the decisions were made at the top, which causes frustration and hurts programs. Dean Schroeder observed that CLA (Professor Tarone's college) decided to return to the number of graduate students it had in 2005.

Professor Nelson asked if Masters programs have been decentralized to the colleges. They have moved away from a dichotomous view that Ph.D. programs are managed by the Graduate School and Masters programs by the colleges, Dean Schroeder said. That is no longer the case; they have decided to keep the enrollment process for Masters programs at the central level where that makes sense; the Graduate School has not controlled admissions since at least 1992.

As there is a shift in degree-management for Masters programs, Professor Nelson said, that also shifts growth management, and the colleges have to think about the number of undergraduates, Ph.D. students, and Masters students they will have. A new Masters degree does not go through the Graduate School, Dean Schroeder pointed out, it goes to the Provost and the Board of Regents—and the process is not a long one. There was a sense that a community of three million people (i.e., the Twin Cities) had needs and that programs must be able to role programs out quickly, so that is now a local decision. The potential revenue stream is also good, provided the program can keep tuition at the level necessary to hire the faculty. Professor Nelson said she thought it was a good idea that the University is entrepreneurial about Masters programs and conservative about Ph.D. programs. Dean Schroeder agreed, as long as the Masters programs maintain a high level of quality in instruction.

2. Report on Liberal-Education Courses

Vice Provost McMaster next provided information and data on liberal-education courses. He began by distributing the roster of members of the Council on Liberal Education (CLE), a group he appoints with the advice and consent of this Committee. He said it is a remarkably talented group that

has met every other week for the last two years and dealt with hundreds of liberal-education course proposals. CLE is broad-based and thoughtful and he said he feels very confident in the conversations CLE members have had about course proposals. He noted that CLE is not responsible for writing-intensive courses, which fall under the Writing Board.

Vice Provost McMaster distributed a handout, a grid reporting the number of courses in each of the core requirements, in each of the theme requirements, and the number that allow "double-dipping." For example, in the physical sciences core, there are a total of 27 classes with 8280 seats, of which 10 (with 2311 seats) double dip for the environment theme. The grid also reported the number of writing-intensive courses by each theme and core.

Dr. McMaster also provided a table indicating the number of approved courses by core and theme, the number of pending courses in each (they continue to approve courses throughout the academic year), and the number by course level for fall, 2010.

They have learned that students are in good shape in terms of being able to take core and theme courses. One vulnerability is that some courses that provided double-dipping before do not do so now, such as the introductory chemistry and biology courses. Professor Wambach reported that the CLE chair, Professor Hudleston, is still working with Chemistry and Biology to incorporate the environmental theme in their introductory courses. Dr. McMaster agreed but said he admired Chemistry because their faculty looked at the requirements for theme courses and concluded they could not change the course sufficiently to meet the requirements; they believe they have it right in their introductory course and do not wish to change it to the degree required to make it qualify for a theme. So there is a need for more environment-themed courses, and CLE continues to encourage proposals. The biggest problem, Ms. Phillips commented, is simply getting the faculty together to develop course proposals.

Professor Chervany noted that there are no Carlson School of Management courses anywhere on the grid; should he be concerned about that? Dr. McMaster thought not; most Carlson School students take their liberal-education courses outside the Carlson School. The School could add liberal-education courses if it wished to.

Professor Brothen thanked Vice Provost McMaster for the update.

3. Proposed Policy on Appointments to Graduate Examining Committees

Professor Brothen now welcomed Professor Nita Krevans, chair of the Graduate Education Policy Committee, to discuss a revised version of the policy on Appointments to Graduate Examining Committees. The revised policy read as follows (between the * * *):

* * *

Each college must have a set of publicly available standards and processes for appointments to all roles on graduate examining committees, with special attention to requirements for advisors and for chairs of the Ph.D. final oral examination committee.

The following standard policies apply. Collegiate units may develop more specific policies so long as they conform to the policies listed below.

I. Master's committees

a) University of Minnesota faculty members with an earned doctorate or designated equivalent* in an appropriate field* from an accredited institution who hold tenure-track or tenured appointments may serve in any role on master's committees.

*These terms will both be included in a definitions section, where it will also be stated that standard resolution procedures will be followed in case of disputes about judgments of "appropriate field"

[Reason for policy; tenure-track appointments at a research university are made with the expectation of service on graduate committees]

b) Other University of Minnesota faculty and staff (including adjunct faculty) with an earned doctorate or designated equivalent in an appropriate field from an accredited institution may serve on master's committees and act as advisors. All such appointments must be reviewed individually at the collegiate level according to a review process and criteria specified by the collegiate unit.

[Reason for policy: allows flexibility in membership of committees; ensures appropriate standards for graduate education]

c) Emeritus faculty and faculty who have left the University of Minnesota may continue with active committee assignments, including advisor. [Reason for policy: promote timely completion of degrees; recognize need for continuity in advising]

d) Outside experts (with or without faculty appointments elsewhere) may serve on examining committees in any role except as advisor. All such appointments must be reviewed individually at the collegiate level according to a review process and criteria specified by the collegiate unit.

[Reason for policy: allow flexibility in committee membership; make appropriate use of specialists who do not hold University of Minnesota appointments when a student can benefit from their oversight]

e) No one may serve in any role on a graduate examining committee if they have a nonacademic* relationship to the candidate, as it presents an appearance of creating a conflict of interest.

*This term will be defined to permit professional mentors (e.g. a research director at Medtronic) to serve on committees even if they are employers

f) No person working toward a graduate degree at the University of Minnesota may serve on a graduate examining committee unless an exception has been granted by the Dean of Graduate Education.

[Reason for policies; ensures fair and correct examination procedures]

g) Collegiate deans or their designated representatives at the collegiate level must review and approve ALL assignments as advisor.

[Reason for policy: ensures appropriate standards for graduate education; assists initiative to promote clear standards and expectations for graduate advising]

II. Doctoral committees

a) University of Minnesota faculty members with an earned doctorate or designated equivalent or designated equivalent in an appropriate field from an accredited institution who hold tenure-track or tenured appointments may serve in any role on doctoral committees. Special requirements apply for service as chair of the Ph.D. final oral examination committee. (See item b)

[Reason for policy; tenure-track appointments at a research university are made with the expectation of service on graduate committees]

b) The chair of the Ph.D. final oral examination committee

i) may not be the advisor or co-advisor

ii) must hold a tenured appointment at the University of Minnesota and an earned doctorate in an appropriate field from an accredited institution

iii) must understand University of Minnesota doctoral examination procedures*

* There will be a link in this policy item to an appendix outlining the roles and responsibilities of the chair of the Ph.D. final oral examination

[Reason for policy: ensures fair, correct proceedings at final oral]

c) Every Ph.D. final oral examination committee must include at least two tenured/tenure-track University of Minnesota faculty members with earned doctorate or designated equivalents in appropriate fields from an accredited institution, at least one of whom must hold full tenure. There are no exceptions to this requirement.

[Reason for policy: ensures a substantial role for University of Minnesota faculty when awarding the university's own doctorate]

d) Other University of Minnesota faculty and staff (including adjunct faculty) with an earned doctorate or designated equivalent in an appropriate field from an accredited institution may serve on doctoral committees and act as advisors. All such appointments must be reviewed individually at the collegiate level according to a review process and criteria specified by the collegiate unit.

[Reason for policy: allows flexibility in membership of committees; ensures appropriate standards for graduate education]

e) Emeritus faculty and faculty who have left* the University of Minnesota may continue with active committee assignments, including advisor, but may not serve as chair of the Ph.D. final oral examination committee.

*The definitions will specify that faculty who left because they were denied tenure ARE included in this policy.

[Reason for policy: promote timely completion of degrees; recognize need for continuity in advising]

f) Outside experts (with or without faculty appointments elsewhere) may serve on examining committees in any role except as advisor or chair of the Ph.D. final oral examination committee. All such appointments must be reviewed individually at the collegiate level according to a review process and criteria specified by the collegiate unit.

[Reason for policy: allow flexibility in committee membership; make appropriate use of specialists who do not hold University of Minnesota appointments when a student can benefit from their oversight]

g) No one may serve in any role on a graduate examining committee if they have a nonacademic relationship to the candidate, as it presents an appearance of creating a conflict of interest.

h) No person working toward a graduate degree at the University of Minnesota may serve on a graduate examining committee unless an exception has been granted by the Dean of Graduate Education.

[Reason for policies; ensures fair and correct examination procedures]

i) Collegiate deans or their designated representatives at the collegiate level must review and approve ALL assignments as either advisor or chair of the Ph.D. final oral examination.

[Reason for policy: ensures appropriate standards for graduate education; assists initiative to promote clear standards and expectations for graduate advising]

III. Exceptions

Collegiate deans or their designated representatives at the collegiate level may authorize assignments to master's and doctoral committees that do not fully conform to policies Ia, Ib, IIa, IIbii, and IID.

[Reason for exception to policy: allow flexibility for unusual masters and doctoral topics in line with collegiate needs]

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Professor Krevans began by noting that she had provided the Committee with a list of those who had been consulted on the draft policy; as a result of that consultation, they have made a number of revisions to the policy—and are prepared to make additional revisions as needed. They restructured the policy along the lines this Committee suggested at its last meeting, separating Master's and Doctoral committees; the result is considerable repetition but with additional restrictions on the Ph.D. final-oral committees. There were concerns about those with non-Ph.D. terminal degrees (e.g., Master of Architecture, Master of Fine Arts) advising doctoral students; they will have a list of fields, vetted by the deans, where these degrees are considered to be equivalent to doctoral degrees.

Professor Wambach commented that this version of the policy looks very good. It got longer, but the two sections make it very clear. Professor Krevans agreed and observed that when people look at a policy, they look for the part that applies to them, rather than reading the entire policy to pick out applicable parts, so in this case the repetition serves the cause of efficiency.

Professor Nelson said that the J.D. will need to be one of the designated degrees. Professor Krevans agreed that the list would have to include anyone with a J.D. serving as chair of an examining committee or an adviser, but someone with a J.D. could serve as a member of a committee without extra review.

Ms. Phillips wondered if section I(e), allowing an employer to serve on a committee, would not create a conflict of interest. Professor Krevans said there are a number of Masters and Ph.D. programs in which students have a working relationship, including employment, with local companies—they are model industry-university partnerships that departments have worked hard to create. They need to be distinguished from an employment relationship where a graduate student may serve as a nanny for a faculty member's children. When a student is working a local company in a program sponsored by the graduate program, it is acceptable for someone to serve on a committee. The student in this case is really a "super intern" rather than an employee in the strict sense of the term. This is similar to a faculty member who has a student employee on a grant, Ms. Phillips commented; Professor Krevans agreed. There are professional relationships that are an essential part of programs that the University wants to encourage; that is why the policy language is careful on this point.

Ms. Phillips said that the rationale for sections I(f) and II(h) do not match what Professor Krevans has told the Committee. The policy provision is that no one who is a student in a graduate program may serve on an examining committee, Professor Krevans said—but the Dean of Graduate Education may grant exceptions. They do not want graduate students sitting on a committee for other graduate students, even if the person is already a faculty member. The policy says "no" because the intent is to have fair examinations, and those enrolled in a graduate program may lack the experience necessary to serve on an examining committee. But they understand there may need to be exceptions; the cases will be rare and they see it as a special case of conflict of interest.

Professor Chervany said that the terms "fair and correct" in section I(f) and II(g) are exceedingly vague. If Dean Schroder is being given the right to grant exceptions, the policy should give some guidelines on how to think about granting the exception. "Fair" and "correct" do not provide guidance; the terms need to be made operational. Dr. Falkner noted that the reasons listed in brackets in the draft policy will not appear in the final policy, but there could be an FAQ that elaborates factors that should be considered in granting an exception. Professor Chervany said that as long as the student, the adviser, and Dean Schroder understand the constraints, and everyone knows what goes into considering an exception, that would be fine.

Professor Nelson said that for graduate students forming a committee, the process is like alchemy—it is a mystery to them. How can the administration help graduate students use this policy? That will come up in the next policy her committee will address, Professor Krevans said, on the role of the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS). The DGS will be asked to sign off on every committee for every student at every level of the program. If they say the DGS has that responsibility, it will be the

responsibility of the DGS to work with students to form committees. That is the current practice. It is hard to ask every adviser to stay up to date on all policies; that is the responsibility of the DGS (that is why they are given small perks, such as released time or small stipends). Vice Provost McMaster said that in his part of the University, the adviser helps select the examining committees and the DGS never tries to micro-manage the selection. Committee members are chosen on the basis of intellectual terrain. Professor Nelson agreed, and said that she advises based on the intellectual contribution, but she does not know the specific characteristics of each faculty member (conflict of interest/status in other graduate programs, etc.); do the DGSs even know? They may not, Professor Krevans said, but the Graduate School has a wonderful website for DGSs that has a list of the things they need to know quickly—about committees, forms, advisers, etc. Professor Nelson said that what the DGS needs is information about someone new who has become a faculty member, which is updated over time.

Professor McCormick suggested it would be helpful for DGSs if Professor Krevans's committee could highlight anything in the new policy that is different from what they have been doing up to this time.

Ms. Phillips pointed out that under the provisions of the policy, it would be possible to have a Masters committee with no tenured faculty on it. Professor Krevans said that many units offer Masters degrees and make extensive use of non-tenured/tenure-track faculty. In theory, one could have a committee with no tenured or tenure-track faculty on it, but there are more restrictions about who can serve as an adviser. But a non-tenured/tenure-track person could serve as an advisor and the committee could have no tenured/tenure-track faculty, Ms. Phillips said. Professor Krevans agreed. Professor Brothen observed that if the University offers a larger number of entrepreneurial Masters programs, there could be more such committees in the future. Professor Krevans noted that many Masters programs that make use of non-tenured/tenure-track faculty do not use committees because the degree is based on coursework. They had pushback on requiring at least two tenured/tenure-track faculty members on Ph.D. committees but they have not yielded on that point.

Professor McCormick noted that section II(f) enables the use of outside experts on Ph.D. committees; could a college be more conservative? They can, Professor Krevans said. Colleges may develop their own policies that can be more restrictive than this one as long as they do not close any of the gates the policy says must be open (e.g., excluding faculty members from certain departments).

Apropos of sections I(g) and II(i), Professor Siliciano said that he is in a college that has no academic officer to look at the membership of committees; who should do so? The review must be at the college level, Professor Krevans said, and it is up to the dean to decide. It may be review by an associate dean; the college must specify the process it will use and it cannot just delegate the responsibility to the program. Larger colleges have associate deans for graduate education.

Professor Tarone asked about the idea of the "appropriate field" mentioned in section II(d). Graduate faculty membership has been abolished so anyone can be in an appropriate field. If there are disputes, what is the resolution procedure? This policy determines who can serve, Professor Krevans said, and the Graduate School catalogue has rules about the composition of committees; those rules are still in force. The question is what mechanism can be used to say "no" to appointing someone, for example, in theoretical statistics to a studio arts committee. The problem is when the fields are very close or overlap, Professor Tarone said, and the decision is not made by the graduate faculty. The graduate faculty has been abolished, Professor Krevans agreed, and the rule is that a certain number

must be from the student's field. The DGS decides and the college decides, but the Graduate School does not vet the selections. The college must have a process to approve committee memberships. This policy gives the colleges authority to decide how to decide if someone is appropriate to the field, Professor Wambach said. Dean Schroeder agreed. In all of the discussions that have taken place since last year, one highly-desired change was more flexibility in deciding who could be on examining committees so that the appointment process does not take so much time. With this policy, the DGS decides and the college approves. Under the old process, the DGS and adviser signed the forms and sent them to the Graduate School to be sure there was no violation of policy, Professor Krevans said; now the colleges do that vetting. It is not in the sole power of the DGS to decide, Dean Schroeder agreed.

The Committee voted unanimously to approve the revised policy.

Professor Brothen thanked Professor Krevans for bringing the policy revisions back to the Committee, and adjourned the meeting at 3:25.

-- Gary Engstrand

University of Minnesota