

Minutes*

**Senate Committee on Educational Policy
Wednesday, December 15, 2010
2:00 – 4:00
238A Morrill Hall**

Present: Thomas Brothen (chair), Robert McMaster, Cody Mikl, Kristen Nelson, Alon McCormick, Peh Ng, Jane Phillips, Jessica Schroeder, Paul Siliciano, Alfonso Sintjago, Donna Spannaus-Martin, Elaine Tarone, Cathrine Wambach

Absent: Barbara Brandt, Norman Chervany, Sean Finn, Joseph Kirchner, Peggy Root, Henning Schroeder, Michael Wade

Guests: Tina Falkner (Academic Support Resources)

Other: none

[In these minutes: (1) report of the chair; (2) updated on undergraduate education]

1. Report of the Chair

Professor Brothen convened the meeting at 2:00 and began by noting a resolution from the Minnesota Student Association asking for designation of the top instructors based on the student ratings of teaching. The Committee will discuss it in the spring.

Professor Brothen also noted a handout indicating a 360-degree review of the administrative policy framework, including interview questions, that Committee members are asked to complete.

Apropos of the MSA resolution, Professor Wambach said, about four years ago, when the student-rating questions were being rewritten, she worked with the students to reduce the number of student-release questions and to make the format more consistent. Students complained that most faculty members do not release the results of the student ratings, and she informed them at the time that the University cannot simply release them because they are private data under Minnesota law. She and Vice Provost Carney took the position that if the students would agree to drop the student-release questions (which lengthen the student-rating form), they would work with the students to develop a program like the one at the University of Illinois, which publishes a list of distinguished teachers every term. Students were interested in the possibility but were unwilling to drop the student-release questions. The only ones who benefit from the student-release questions are the faculty, because most faculty members do not release them. The students still seem to like the Illinois system but remain unwilling to drop the student-release questions. One upside of such a list is that graduate students and others with high ratings appear on the list, which would benefit them in preparing a curriculum vita. A downside is that in classes with multiple sections, some instructors might appear on the list and others not, causing students to try to enroll in some sections and not others.

* 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.

Ms. Phillips expressed concerns about the Vikings game scheduled for the Monday evening of finals week and said there should be some kind of announcement from the University that everything will be worked out. The concern is about the silence thus far; it would help to hear something, because it is likely campus transit "will be all messed up."

2. Undergraduate Education Update

Professor Brothen turned now to Vice Provost McMaster to provide an update on undergraduate education.

Vice Provost McMaster distributed copies of a voluminous handout that covered undergraduate education "from soup to nuts," a presentation he made to the Board of Regents the week before this meeting. He started with national trends. [Much of the language in these minutes is taken directly from the presentation.]

-- Flagship campuses are becoming academically more competitive, a phenomenon that has an impact on this campus: Students have different expectations; the "best of the best" are coming to the University, which creates demands on student services and the curriculum.

-- Research-one publics have placed renewed emphasis on the importance of undergraduate education, something one can see in the investment in service offices and financial aid; his office did not exist 15 years ago, and at a recent conference it was clear that research universities want to emphasize undergraduate education and link it better to research.

-- Public support for higher education has been eroding, fast; as a result,

-- The cost of a college degree and the supporting financial aid have risen quickly; the University has invested hundreds of millions of dollars in new financial support.

-- There is a national-level scrutiny on the need to improve graduation rates, something they see at the federal and state levels, and the Board of Regents has made it clear it has expectations; for the class of 2008, it is expected that 60% will graduate in four years.

-- Students are more career-focused than in the past—and parents even more so.

-- Many freshmen arrive with college credits (AP, PSEO, College in the Schools). Some arrive as juniors, with 60-70 credits, a situation that creates questions about the curriculum. If students arrive with 60 credits; they are not likely to stay at the University all four years, but if they come with only 30 or so credits, they typically use the extra credits to embellish their undergraduate curriculum and take the full four years.

Professor Brothen asked if students who come with 60+ credits have depth in some areas. They do, Dr. McMaster said. The campus has 600 PSEO students, 500 of whom are new and 100 of whom were PSEO students as high-school juniors and returned for their senior year. Do those students come to the University after their PSEO classes, Professor Brothen asked? Approximately 40% matriculate as undergraduates, Dr. McMaster said.

Mr. Mikl asked about the impact of a large number of PSEO and AP students on K-12 and higher education. Dr. McMaster said that while he is not an expert on the subject, the advanced credits do seem to help students graduate from the University in a timely fashion; they may finish their liberal-education requirements early and have a richer curriculum at the University. But there are questions about the effect of these courses on the high schools and there is also an economic issue for parents (that is, it can save them tuition money when the student goes to college). And there are social effects, Mr. Mikl said; some students enjoy the camaraderie of high school while others are more socially marginal and moving to the University provides a different academic and social experience.

Professor McCormick asked what percentage of PSEO students stay at the University. Dr. McMaster said 40-45%, which is a good rate. Professor Siliciano said it was good if the University can capture those students. He said that No Child Left Behind dramatically altered public high schools, which are stretched to provide challenging classes, so it is good that the University can fill the gap for good students.

Dr. McMaster turned next to the strategic questions.

-- What are the challenges to reaching the Board of Regents retention/graduation goals, and how can we address these? Through careful monitoring of the curriculum and review of degree requirements. The four-year graduation-rate goal is 60%, the first time in modern history, and the campus has ten more percentage points to go in the next two years to reach it. Ms. Phillips reported that her students, on learning of the 60% goal, said it was too low; they were shocked and disappointed at the number.

-- How can the Office of Undergraduate Education (OUE) best assist each of the colleges in improving their retention and graduation? They have an annual four-year-graduation retreat, but his office has no authority over students—it is the colleges that graduate students. So his office must have partnerships with the colleges, and it does have close relationships with the associate deans.

-- How can the OUE enhance student support (advising, study space, service learning, UROP)? Through investment in CAPE, A Plus, an enhanced UROP (more about each later in these minutes)

-- How can the University community and campus culture support four-year graduation? In messaging to student groups, faculty governance, and the Council on Undergraduate Education. This has to be a holistic project; faculty must tell students it is important to graduate in four years (e.g., in order to avoid taking out another loan).

Professor Nelson asked Dr. McMaster if he could provide data demonstrating that four-year graduation is better than a second degree or major. That would be hard to do with data, he said. Professor Nelson said she agreed with Dr. McMaster's position on four-year graduation but that it would be helpful to have data. Professor Siliciano reported that the Dean of the Medical School has said that in their case, it makes no difference if a student has a double major or second degree. Dr. McMaster said that he has five or six points to make the case for graduating in four years, but it can be difficult to argue that a second major won't pay off. Professor McCormick said that one exception is the industrial coop, which may delay graduation for engineering students but that is usually worth it to the student. Dr. McMaster reported that he has had discussions with the associate dean of the College of Science and Engineering (CS&E) about the value of coops versus timely graduation. In his own view, Dr. McMaster said, students should do a rich internship/coop experience over the summer rather

than take a regular semester. Many CS&E students have enough credits that they can do the coop and still graduate in four years given the number of advanced placement credits.

The mission of undergraduate education at the University's Twin cities campus is to "provide a distinctive, transformative educational experience of the highest quality in an urban environment, within a research University that cares deeply about the quality of teaching and learning, to prepare students for challenging and productive careers, positions of leadership in our society, graduate or professional education and lifelong learning."

Dr. McMaster provided information about the 2010 freshman class, students who will graduate in 2014.

In 2000, the Twin Cities campus has 14,565 applications, made 10,936 offers, and enrolled 4,957 students. In 2010 the campus had 36,860 applications, made 17,624 offers, and enrolled 5,323 students. The offer rate is about 48%, which is very competitive for large public universities. Professor Wambach pointed out that the University's offer rate used to be about 75%. Dr. McMaster reported that the number of applicants at the end of November, 2010, was up about 1500 over last year, which is great news, but the curve on the graph is leveling off because the campus will not continue to see increases at the same rate as it has the last several years. Nor is it a desirable goal to get a lot of applications simply to make the acceptance rates look good (e.g., low). Eventually the application rates could go down. One summary statistic is that the number of freshman applicants to the campus increased from 18,541 in 2004 to 36,860 in 2010, an increase of 98.8%, which allows the campus to be more selective in admissions.

Dr. McMaster next reviewed data on the percentage of Twin Cities freshmen who came from Minnesota high schools; since 2000 the number has hovered around the mid-60%*s*. The goal is that it be in the 60-65% range, and not lower than 60%, because of the University's obligations to the state, but they also want international students and students from elsewhere in the country. Relatedly, the number of new international undergraduates has increased significantly since 2003, up from 131 (transfers plus freshmen) to 472 in 2010, which is down from 583 in 2009. Part of the decline was due to a new international confirmation fee that students must now pay. The goal is to have about 5% of undergraduates be international students.

Professor Tarone asked if there are any data on the four-year graduation rate for international students. It is comparable to that of other students, Dr. McMaster said, and they have strong motivation to do so because they are paying non-resident tuition. Professor McCormick asked about the number of international students who come with support from their governments. Dr. McMaster said he did not know, but there are a large number of such students from China, India, and South Korea.

Dr. McMaster next noted the percentage of new freshmen who are students of color. In 2001, it was 16.9%; in 2010 it was 18%. In 2006, 2007, and 2008, the percentage had been above 20%, and in 2009 it was 19.1%.

The Committee next looked at data on the average ACT composite test score and the average high-school rank (HSR) of Twin Cities freshmen since 2000. In 2000 the HSR was 76.3 and the ACT was 24.5; in 2010 the HSR was 85.2 and the ACT was 27.2. Both numbers have been increasing

steadily over the last ten years and the campus has made remarkable progress. There has been a substantial jump in the ACT, but Wisconsin and Illinois are over 28 and the Ohio State enrollment-management-plan goal is an average ACT composite of 29. Dr. McMaster also presented data on the percentage of new freshmen in the top 25% and top 10% of their high school classes. Between 2001 and 2010, the percentage in the top 25% increased from 62.9% to 82.9%; the percentage in the top 10% increased from 29.2% to 43.3%.

Dr. McMaster reviewed the percentage change in high-school graduation data (2010-2015) for a number of states in the Midwest. Every state shows a decline; Indiana shows the smallest decline, at 0.7%; Michigan and North Dakota the largest at nearly 12%. Minnesota is in middle, at a 7.2% decline. This is not good news, he commented, although Minnesota is not as bad off as a number of surrounding states. The University, however, does draw heavily on the surrounding states, which is one reason he does not expect the number of applications to increase at the same rate as they have in the immediate past.

The University is moving to enhanced recruitment at the national level, Dr. McMaster told the Committee. The rationale is that it is needed to offset the declining numbers of Minnesota high school graduates, to enhance the “brand recognition” of the University, to increase the geographic diversity of students, and to bring increased workforce talent to the state. Newly-targeted areas for recruitment are St. Louis, Kansas City (both MO and KS), and Omaha.

Dr. McMaster turned to data on the number of baccalaureate degrees granted on the Twin Cities campus in 2010. There were 6,942 degrees granted to 6,758 students (184 earned two degrees, such as a BA and a BFA), and 35% of the degrees were in STEM fields. By comparison, there were about 5,500 baccalaureate degrees awarded in 2003, with a steady increase ever since.

Dr. McMaster changed the focus to progress toward the Regents' goals on retention and graduation for the Twin Cities campus. In 1996 (entering class of 1992), the four-year graduation rate was 15.2%. In 2005 (entering class of 2001) it was 37%; and in the succeeding years it went to 41.2%, 45.5%, 45.9%, 46.7%, and 50.2% in 2010. He described this as his happiest graph, given what the faculty and colleges have done in 14 years. They focus on the four-year graduation rate, although much national data reports six-year rates. He next looked at a graph indicating changes in one-year retention rates and graduation rates after four, five, and six years, for 1992 and then 2001-2010. The one-year retention rate in 1992 was 78.6%; in 2009 it was 89.5% (but in 2008 it was 90.7%). The goal is 90%. The decrease from 2008 to 2009 appears to have been because non-resident students dropped out more; it may be that the campus does not provide a welcoming-enough atmosphere, because the non-resident tuition is a good deal for students, the lowest by far in the CIC schools. He said he did not believe that tuition as the driving force in the decrease.

Professor McCormick asked if Michigan and Wisconsin, which have high numbers of non-resident students, just say that it comes with the territory—non-resident students want to go home. Vice Provost McMaster thought that was probably the case. The University needs to be mindful of what it should do to keep students. That retention percentage needs to change; most of the University's peers are at 92-93%.

Dr. McMaster next reviewed briefly the retention rates by college and entry year. Except for then-IT/now CS&E, every college saw a slight decline in retention rates from 2008 to 2009, and some more than others. He also reviewed four-year graduation rates by college and entry year; for students

who entered in 2006, the percentages ranged from 23.4% to 77.4%; the second-lowest was 46.4%, and the reason for the one outlier at 23.4% is that it is Education and Human Development, which still has the last cohort of General College students. The CEHD graduation rate should rebound next year. (He also provided data on the 5-year and 6-year graduation rates by college and year, which the Committee did not review at the meeting.)

Ms. Phillips noted that colleges have different goals for four-year graduation rates: The Carlson School goal is 70%, CS&E is 55%, and the other colleges are 60%. Dr. McMaster said those goals were set before he took office, but he surmises that they were drawn from historical data and based on what the University believed would be possible.

The Committee next looked at data correlating graduation rates (for the 2002 and 2004 freshman cohorts) with different behavioral subgroups. Dr. McMaster explained that students with a higher ACT score graduate at higher rates; the relationship between ACT score and graduation rate is almost linear. The same is true for high-school rank. Students who are in a living-learning community graduate at a higher rate than those who just live in a residence hall, who in turn graduate at a higher rate than those who live off campus. Student-athletes graduated at a slightly higher rate than their peers in the cohort. Students who complete fewer than 30 credits the first year are significantly less likely to graduate than those who complete more; similarly for first-year GPA, in that a GPA of less than 2.5 led to a graduation rate of 12% (30% after six years) while a GPA over 2.5 led to a graduation rate of 53% (76% after six years). The interactive effect of credits and GPA is even greater than the effect of either alone: Fewer than 30 credits and a GPA of less than 2.5 led to a graduation rate of 5% (20% after six years).

Dr. McMaster next looked at how the University stands on four-year graduation rates compared to public peers in the CIC plus Berkeley, UCLA, Florida, Washington, and Texas (for the other institutions, the rate is for 2009; for Minnesota it is 2010). Purdue is low at 38.4%; Michigan is highest at 72.1%. Minnesota was at 50.2%; on either side of it, Michigan State was at 49.7% and Wisconsin was at 50.3%. The University is marching upwards, Dr. McMaster commented, but peer institutions are increasing their graduation rates as well.

The Committee looked quickly at the most recent six-year graduation rate for freshmen scholarship athletes (in this case, six years is used because that is the figure used by the NCAA): female athletes graduated at 86%, compared to 68% for all female students; males graduate at 57%, compared to 65% for all male students.

Dr. McMaster next discussed the University Honors Program (UHP), which, he said, is making terrific progress. He described the advising model: Honors advising expertise spans disciplines and colleges; UHP advisors work closely with the advising staff in each college; and students with varied interests benefit from this collaboration and diversity of knowledge. He presented some 2010 data highlights, including the target number of UHP students by college; several colleges exceeded their target and the actual number of students in UHP missed the target by only three students. The average ACT composite score for UHP students was 31.6; in CS&E it was 33.8 and in CBS it was 33.2. The average high-school rank was 96.8; 14.85 of the students were students of color.

In response to queries, Dr. McMaster said he did not know how many of the UHP students had double majors and that there are about 2300-2400 students in UHP. He has made no progress in paying departments for offering honors classes; they have to do it out of the goodness of their heart. The problem, Professor Wambach said, is that departments lose money on honors courses; their priority is major courses, and they don't have the staff for honors courses or freshman seminars. Dr. McMaster wondered, however, if a faculty of 25 could not release time for one or two honors courses; is the curriculum that tight, he asked? What they hear from departments is that some people are on leave and some have bought out time to work on grants, Professor Wambach said. Why would it be necessary to encourage departments to provide honors courses for their own majors, Dr. McMaster asked? Resources are important, Professor McCormick said, as is leadership; deans and department heads must emphasize the need to offer such courses. They have made one change, Dr. McMaster pointed out: Advanced graduate students who have gone through the "future faculty" program may now teach freshman seminars and honors seminars. Long-term P&A staff may also teach those courses.

They have tried to build a strong curriculum for UHP students, Dr. McMaster explained, and he provided examples of departmental honors courses and honors seminars. Departmental courses (about 45 per semester) included General Biology, Contemporary Management, Greek and Roman Mythology, Human Evolution, Introduction to Sociology, and Principles of Macroeconomics. Honors seminars (15 during spring semester) included Climate Change: Myths, Mysteries, and Uncertainties, Communicating Between Cultures, Foreign Relations Law and the U.S. Constitution, Learning Anthropology Through Science Fiction, and Understanding the Evolution-Creationism Controversy.

Dr. McMaster compared students in UHP (entering fall, 2010) with students at other universities. For example, UHP students in CS&E and CBS had an average composite ACT of 33.5, which compares favorably with the scores of students at Caltech (34), MIT (33.5), Cornell engineering (33), Carnegie Mellon engineering (32.5), and Georgia Tech (30). By the same measure, the UHP student ACT score (all students) of 31.6 compares favorably with the scores of students at other liberal arts colleges: Amherst (31.5), Carleton (31), Williams (31), Grinnell (30.5), Vassar (30.5), Reed (30), Swarthmore (30), etc. They also compare favorably with students at top-ranked universities: Stanford (32), Northwestern (32), Duke (31.5), Carnegie Mellon (31), U of Chicago (30.5), and Georgetown (30). These students could be anywhere in the country, Dr. McMaster concluded, but they made the choice to come to Minnesota.

Dr. McMaster turned next to UROP and reported on the number of proposals and number of awards from 2000-01 to 2010-11. The number has increased steadily and reached a peak in 2010-11, with nearly 700 proposals and about 550 awards, but the most recent year included federal stimulus funds, which are going away. This is a critical program, he said, and the goal is to get 1,000 students per year involved. This year they have funding for 620 students, so they are still short of the goal. Most of the proposals and awards were in CBS, CLA, and CS&E. The issue is how much of the gap between the actual numbers and the goal can be filled; that is not clear, but they do want to get to 1,000 awards per year.

Dr. McMaster next reviewed the Access to Success (ATS) program, which is "designed to assist students whose experiences and high school records indicate potential for success, but whose high school rank and test scores alone may not." The program provides curriculum integration, intensive advising, peer mentoring, and networking opportunities. There were 454 students in ATS in

the fall, 229 in CLA, 192 in CEHD, and 33 in CFANS. Many of these students would have been in General College in the past, he said, and the retention rate in fall, 2009, was 82%.

ATS is going into its 4th year, Dr. McMaster reported, and there have been changes to the program: They have hired a full-time Director of ATS, they are working to better coordinate efforts across the colleges and develop a four-year program, the program in the second to fourth years will focus on the development of activities, workshops, experiences to help students become more engaged on campus and prepare them for graduate/professional school or careers, and they are looking into opening up the program to all freshman- admitting colleges. They have three years of experience with ATS and the colleges, each using a different model, have done a great job, Dr. McMaster said; it is time to take a second look at the program. Professor Wambach recalled that President-elect Kaler had said he believes there is a similarly-effective program at Stony Brook, and he may have strong opinions about ATS. Dr. McMaster responded that Dr. Kaler has received information about the ATS program.

Dr. McMaster turned next to the curriculum and first reported on data related to Freshman Seminars. 3,728 students did not take one; they had an average GPA of 3.11; 1,672 students did take one and had an average GPA of 3.22. Of those who did not take a seminar, the first-year retention rate was 88.4%; for those who did, the retention rate was 91.9%. Of those who did not take a seminar, the four-year graduation rate was 47.6%; for those who did, it was 56.8%. There have been several curricular initiatives in the 2007-10 period, including adoption of the student-learning outcomes, the baccalaureate writing initiatives, the revision of liberal-education requirements, and adoption of the student-development outcomes.

The writing-enriched curriculum (WEC) has as its goal the provision to "departmental faculty with method and means for infusing discipline-relevant writing instruction into undergraduate curricula at the University of Minnesota such that all undergraduate degrees are 'writing-enriched.'" Faculty within units create and implement Writing Plans, which are approved by the Campus Writing Board. The Bush Foundation provided funding (matched by the University) in 2007, for a pilot program; by 2010 there were 23 departments that had writing plans. There are annual reports from two external evaluators, surveys of faculty, students, and external affiliates, formal ratings of student writing (using criteria from the plans), student group interviews, and comparison with students who do not participate. Where they have data, students who go through a program with a writing plan are better writers. The program is provided \$455,000 per year from his office and \$1 million (over the grant period) from the Bush Foundation through the summer of 2012; they are seeking funding from NSF to support a writing program in the sciences. Dr. McMaster reported on the departments that are involved in the WEC, which extended to 6,000 students by the spring of 2010.

The liberal-education curriculum has also been revised. In the core requirements, the following number of courses has been approved by the Council on Liberal Education:

1. Arts and Humanities (111)
2. Biological Sciences (17)
3. Historical Perspectives (114)
4. Literature (63)
5. Mathematical Thinking (23)
6. Physical Sciences (28)

7. Social Sciences (74)

The Council has approved the following number of Theme courses:

1. Civic Life and Ethics (67)
2. Diversity and Social Justice in the U.S. (110)
3. Environment (48)
4. Global Perspectives (141)
5. Technology and Society (25)

They have work to do on the last theme, Dr. McMaster commented, and are nudging colleges to offer more. But the curriculum is in place and all students have been placed into courses they need.

In terms of student support and advising, Dr. McMaster explained CAPE, the Center for Academic Planning and Exploration, in its first full year of operation under the direction of Associate Vice Provost Laura Koch and Director LeeAnn Melin. The CAPE mission is "to provide support for students who are undecided in their major or are seeking acceptance into a competitive major." Students are provided one-to-one coaching sessions, an individualized action plan to help them determine a major/career, an online "exploring majors" course, and CAPE is staffed by experienced University advisors and career counselors. This is an all-University resource, Dr. McMaster said. It is cross-college, time-intensive, one-on-one, has the individualized new course for one credit to help them think about career and life, and directs students to services at critical times. As for students CAPE might potentially help, they have responses from 5,068 of the incoming (fall 2009) students: 23% knew exactly what they wanted to major in, 18% were nearly decided on a major, and 59% had no idea or wanted to do more exploration. Dr. McMaster also reported that about 1700 freshmen admitted in fall, 2008, were still "undeclared" at the start of their sophomore year—the students the University wants to see graduate in 2012. Those students who have used CAPE services have been extremely positive about them.

Another item of student support is APLUS (which is not an acronym). It is a tool created at the University (in CLA), and modified/supported by the Office of Undergraduate Education for all – campus use, to provide timely information for advisors about students most at risk for not graduating or not being retained because of actions they are taking or not taking. The information is near-real-time (about ten minutes old). APLUS supports better advising service for all students, gives advisers one location to view current, detailed information about a student, enables more timely communication with students, and faster resolution of issues, and ensures that pertinent information about a student, including advising notes, follows the student and is available to advisers across the campus. APLUS helps advisers focus on students most in need of advising and supplies information about advisees' registration activity, mid-term alert status, GPA, and advising appointments. Each morning advisers receive a list of their advisees with new or outstanding advising alerts, allowing advisers to prioritize student contacts. APLUS identifies students who exhibit specific behaviors that affect retention and graduation (e.g., dropping classes, missing advising appointments). It also allows reports that can be customized for particular concerns and student groups. It ties all the institutional communications with students together in one place. The notes in the system follow the student, not just the student within the college, Dr. McMaster explained, and APLUS represents a paradigm shift that advisers have indicated has worked extremely well.

Dr. Falkner provided examples of the screens available to advisors. On one, he explained that the advisor can choose to log contact (like a phone call), associate it with an alert/warning, and request a reminder about the contact from the system; the contacts tab can also record automated emails sent to students; the system allows the advisor to record notes in APLUS and to save those notes to PeopleSoft; notes about the student follow the student via central system; and the system enables better data sharing/gathering across the spectrum of academic advising that serves the student. An advisor can see the "contact dialogue" that has taken place with a student.

The records belong to the student, Dr. Falkner observed, and by federal law they have a right to everything the University has about them. Professor McCormick asked if everyone who has access to or is using APLUS knows not to put in inappropriate information or comments. They do, Dr. Falkner responded, but the same potential problem exists with paper records. They do not monitor what is added to the records, but if they see something that causes concern, they caution the person. It is important to document what happened, not what someone thinks. APLUS is now for academic advisors but eventually will be available to faculty advisors as well. In that case, Ms. Phillips said, people need to have training. People only have access to information about their own advisees, Dr. Falkner said. What number of others has access to the information, Ms. Phillips inquired. Access is very limited, Dr. Falkner said. Dr. McMaster noted that he does not have access. Professor McCormick agreed with the point about training and said everyone with access should have FERPA training; Dr. Falkner said that is now required. This is an incredible time-saver, Professor Brothen said, and helps provide information when people have questions. Moreover, Dr. Falkner added, students expect that information will be shared across units, because they don't want ask, "why are you asking me that again?"

Financial aid was the next topic. Dr. McMaster reported that for the Twin Cities 2009-10 baccalaureate graduates:

-- 59.8% of the students who graduated in four years borrowed, with an average student loan indebtedness of \$26,277;

-- 67.9% of the students who graduated in five years (that is, more than four years) borrowed, with an average student loan indebtedness of \$29,913; and

-- 70.0% of the students who graduated in six years borrowed, with an average student loan indebtedness of \$31,027.

All three numbers are an increase over the previous year. There is huge variance within the three groups, Dr. McMaster said, and he assured Committee members they would be stunned at numbers on the high end. As students go from the fourth to the fifth year of enrollment, 8% more of them had to borrow money.

Finally, Dr. McMaster reviewed retention and graduation strategies.

-- Maintain incentives provided by 13-credit registration rule—and consider a change to 14 credits (or even 15)

-- Target financial aid to students most in need

- Enhance first-year programs, including freshman and transfer orientation and freshman Welcome Week, and continue the strong messages during the first year about graduating in four years; they would like to offer junior seminars as well but funding constraints preclude them
- Conduct earlier interventions with students who are showing signs of difficulty (e.g., mid-term alerts); in this regard, APLUS has helped
- Continue development of Grad Planner and other tools for advisors and students
- Monitor curriculum and course scheduling to ensure student access to needed courses (five departments have reviewed and reformed their degree requirements)
- Increase education in fiscal planning and literacy

With respect to retention and graduation, Dr. McMaster concluded his report by saying that there are cultural expectations that have been created. The University will:

- Value intellectual exploration, but within boundaries (plan for a 4-year graduation from Day 1)—and understand that it does not help the student to do three majors and graduate in six years or more
- See 30 credits per year as "normal"
- Help students make a clear decision on major and direction by end of sophomore year (using CAPE and other services)
- Help students see themselves as part of a defined cohort
- Use the Grad Planner and revise grad plans
- Recognize the fiscal concerns created for students by taking longer than four years to graduate (that is, indebtedness).

Professor Wambach asked if the Board of Regents had any particular concerns. Dr. McMaster said they asked for the plans for the Access to Success developmental courses (there are not very many).

What about distance learning, Professor McCormick asked? That will be part of the enrollment-management report, Dr. McMaster said. His office's goal is to get students through bottleneck courses they need to complete their degrees; one question is whether some of them can be offered online. He said he was not so concerned about online majors and minors, he simply wants to help students graduate.

Ms. Phillips repeated the earlier comment that it would be helpful to have selling points about the four-year graduation rate. She sees students who are exploring and doing wonderful things, including study abroad. It would help if there were data from other institutions that students are doing all these wonderful things and still graduating in four years (e.g., Michigan, Penn State).

Professor Brothen thanked Vice Provost McMaster for his report and adjourned the meeting at 4:00.

-- Gary Engstrand

University of Minnesota