

SENATE COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL CONCERNS
MINUTES OF MEETING

April 25, 2011

Morrill Hall Room 238A

[In these minutes: Martin Luther King Jr. Day resolution; nutrition counseling for athletes- follow up; committee business]

[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 represent the views of, nor are they binding on, the Senate, the Administration or the Board of Regents.]

PRESENT: Timothy Sheldon (Chair), Jenny Weber, Michael Sommers, Teresa Schicker, Elizabeth Ault, Marynel Ryan Van Zee, Kim Robien, Michael O'Day, Elizabeth Shay, David Golden, Joseph Marchesani, Sandra Krebsbach, Lisa Pogoff, Michael Sommers,

REGRETS: Ahmed Heikal, Rebecca von Dissen, Leah Iverson, Kaari Nelson

ABSENT: Amelious Whyte, Maria Hanratty, Susan Cable Morrison, Kirsten Makarov, Rebecca Shankle, John Broadhurst, Marissa Wagar

GUESTS: Professor Richard Graff

Timothy Sheldon called the meeting to order, and asked for introductions.

Equity Access and Diversity Martin Luther King Jr. Day Resolution

Professor Richard Graff, a member of the Equity Access and Diversity Committee (EAD), provided the Social Concerns Committee with copies of the EAD Resolution in Support of Enhanced Programming and Communication of University of Minnesota MLK Day Celebrations. He explained the background of the resolution and asked the Social Concerns Committee members for comment and support of the resolution. He noted EAD planned to bring the resolution to the University Senate in the fall after wider consultation with other governance groups.

Professor Graff stated the resolution arose from a perception by several committee members that the University does not do as much to promote the MLK Holiday as other Big Ten Universities. A subcommittee of EAD researched and prepared a report on the 2009 MLK, Jr. celebrations at all of the Big Ten Universities. Some of their findings were that:

- Many Big 10 Universities have week to month long celebrations.
- Many Big 10 Universities organize a large variety of MLK events and programming such as a day of service, academic contests, workshops, and creative performances.
- All Big Ten Universities had a website dedicated to the promotion of the MLK Celebration programming.

- Many Universities promoted all known MLK events going on in their area.

Professor Graff also noted that whether or not a University's spring class schedule began after MLK Day did not impact the number of events that the University sponsored.

Upon completion of the subcommittee's report, EAD determined it wanted to do something positive to improve the climate around diversity and promote community engagement. EAD consulted with Kris Lockhart, associate vice president for OED, and Louis Mendoza, associate vice provost for OED, on the resolution. EAD voted to support the resolution in March 2011. Some questions that remain for EAD with regard to the resolution are:

- Who will help EAD implement the resolution?
- Which other groups should be consulted on the resolution?
- Should the resolution contain more information from the subcommittee report?

Professor Graff asked for the Social Concerns Committee members' input on these questions. Elizabeth Ault asked Professor Graff to elaborate on part "B" of the resolution that states the University should create partnerships with community organizations to hold collaborative MLK-Day events and programming. She stated the University should not reinvent the wheel if outside groups already have MLK Day events. Professor Graff stated that creating a centralized website with an MLK event calendar would provide a central location for all MLK events both University and non-University affiliated. He stated for example, the Community Engagement Office and the Community Service-Learning Center both have MLK celebrations, which could be captured on a central website.

Professor Maria Hanratty asked if EAD had "buy in" from the groups it would like to have implement the resolution. Professor Graff responded that other than the OED staff, Social Concerns is the first group to which he has presented the resolution. He stated the EAD committee's first goal was to draft a resolution, but he recognized that a concerted effort among multiple groups would be needed to implement the resolution. He also noted that not having specific funding for MLK events might interfere with implementation of the resolution.

Sandra Krebsbach stated that providing a central location for MLK day events would be a good service for University alums. Mr. Sheldon asked Professor Graff what types of events are happening on campus, but are not being posted. Professor Graff responded that he could only speak to that issue anecdotally. He stated he has been on the faculty for eleven years, and it has always been difficult to locate information on MLK events.

Professor Marynel Ryan Van Zee stated that the University of Minnesota Morris campus is already organizing collaborative MLK-Day events and programming. Local organizations come to the University and set up tables. There are group activities and community service opportunities. The Morris Community Engagement Office manages this program.

Joseph Marchesani stated he would like the University to do something on Martin Luther King Day. He expressed the sentiment that the day has lost its meaning and is simply part of a three-day weekend. Professor Graff agreed that the symbolism of the day had been diluted, and that it should be about community service, activism, out reach, and engagement.

Lisa Pogoff stated she did not want the central purpose of the holiday to be lost or misappropriated. Susan Cable Morrison indicated that she also serves on EAD, and a lot of thoughtful work went into the resolution. She stated MLK Day is an opportunity to expand everyone's knowledge, and she supported expansion of the holiday to include opportunities for community service and diversity education.

Mr. Sheldon observed that the Social Concerns Committee is supportive of enhanced programming for and communication of MLK-Day celebrations. He asked the committee to consider next steps it could take. Mr. Marchesani suggested gathering a list of all MLK Day events sponsored by the University. David Golden stated it would be important to determine which groups should own and fund the enhanced programming. Mr. Sheldon agreed that the proposed program needs a home within an organization. He suggested the University Research Outreach and Engagement Center. Professor Hanratty asked how the President could be encouraged to support the initiative. She indicated she would like to have high-powered speakers for the event and opportunities for community engagement and service. Professor Graff noted the committee should not forget that the University's mission statement supports the creation and recognition of diversity in community across the University of Minnesota system, and for these reasons the University community should be supportive of the resolution. Professor Sheldon stated it his sense that the committee supports the resolution. He asked committee members to e-mail any additional comments to Dawn Zugay, Senate Staff, and stated she would forward them to Professor Graff. A formal vote was not taken on the resolution.

Nutrition Counseling for University of Minnesota Athletes

Joseph Marchesani stated that about a year ago, the Social Concerns Committee began its discussion about the University's responsibility for the nutritional health of student athletes while they are at the University and when they transition to life after athletics. It was particularly concerned with what assistance is provided to athletes who significantly change their physiques to participate in a sport. He stated that at the March 2011 meeting, three speakers from the Athletic Medicine Department spoke to the committee. One of them, Rasa Troupe, mentioned that Indiana University has a unique program designed to assist athletes in their lives after the completion of their college athletic careers. It was also noted that Dr. Susan Hecht is studying the long-term impact on football players of playing football. At the completion of the March committee meeting, Mr. Marchesani volunteered to follow up with both Dr. Hecht and the University of Indiana.

Mr. Marchesani reported that he had not yet received a response from Dr. Hecht or the University of Indiana Athletics Excellence Academy. He researched the University of Indiana website and he provided the committee with information from the site. He noted

that the materials did not provide any specific details on how the program assists its athletes in transitioning to life after athletics. Elizabeth Shay suggested contacting the Indiana Student Athletic Advisory Committee. Mr. Marchesani stated he would contact it if he did not receive a response from the Indiana University Excellence Academy. He went on to note a recent *60 Minutes* program on head injuries to football players, and his concern that athletes lack the judgment to understand the lifelong consequences of bulking up to participate in football. Ms. Ault commented that the research on the lifelong detrimental consequences of participating in football seems to be at odds with the University's educational mission, and begs the question of why the University supports a football team. Mr. Marchesani noted methods being utilized to lessen the physical impact of football on the players. Mr. Sheldon stated that one of the committee's charges is to convene panels of experts to discuss topics. He suggested the issue of the University's responsibility for the nutritional and physical health of student athletes while they are at the University and when they transition to life after athletics might be an appropriate topic for such a panel. Ms. Krebsbach and Mr. Marchesani agreed that the University would be a good convener of a panel on the topic particularly because of its medical center. Mr. Marchesani stated he would continue to follow up on the issue.

Committee Planning 2011-12

Teresa Schicker brought the committee two suggestions for future topics, and provided them with background on each of the topics. She suggested the committee learn more about building a smart grid on the Twin Cities campus, and look into what planning is in place during the Central Corridor Light Rail Transit (CCLRT) construction to support campus accessibility for those with disabilities. Ms. Schicker proposed that the committee study and support the building of a smart grid on the Twin Cities campus in an effort to promote sustainability in facilities, upkeep, and environmental cost-savings. She stated that University's Technological Leadership Institute suggested building a smart grid. The University of Minnesota Morris already has a smart grid, and installing one on the Twin Cities campus could be a "pilot" for expansion in the entire metropolitan area. Professor Massoud Amin is studying smart grid technology and could speak to the committee. She stated it is her understanding that changing to a smart grid system would provide increased security, prevent outages, and save costs. The system is also "self-healing," responsive to consumer use, and optimizes energy use. Ms. Schicker suggested the committee could find out more about the smart grid and potentially propose a resolution in support of implementing it.

Mr. Sheldon stated the committee has previously focused on energy efficiency and brought in a speaker from Facilities Management. Ms. Pogoff asked if the committee could invite Professor Amin to speak to the committee. Mr. Marchesani stated he had previously heard the professor speak, and he is quite engaging. Ms. Ault asked if Professor Amin has current proposals that the committee could endorse. Mr. Sheldon suggested the committee could research the topic of smart grids and find out. Professor Ryan Van Zee noted that the Morris campus has done a lot of experimentation on alternative energy production including wind turbines and biomass, and stated that the smart grid allows wise use of the energy being produced. The committee agreed that they should try and find someone to speak to it about the topic.

Ms. Schicker also proposed the committee consider the impact of CCLRT construction on those with physical disabilities, but noted the Disabilities Issues Committee might already be addressing this. Mr. Sheldon asked Michael O'Day if he had any knowledge about this topic. He stated that University Relations has a presentation that they are providing on the CCLRT long-term construction plan, but this presentation was not specific to accommodations for those with disabilities. David Golden suggested the committee might consider the impact on small businesses of the rise in property values due to the CCLRT construction. He suggested a speaker from the Isaiah Project, an organization that promotes affordable housing, might be able to speak about this. Mr. Sheldon suggested that Metropolitan Council member, Susan Haigh, might also be able to speak to the committee on this issue, but he also asked the committee to consider the purpose of obtaining this information. Ms. Krebsbach and Ms. Pogoff expressed an interest in learning more about the safety accommodations being made for the CCLRT project particularly for students, those with disabilities, and individuals accessing the hospital. Professor Ryan Van Zee stated she did not believe the issues of safety and accommodations for those with disabilities truly presented issues for the Social Concerns committee and these topics belonged to other committees such as the Disabilities Issues Committee. She thought the CCLRT's impact on businesses fit better within the committee's charge. Several committee members agreed that they should receive an overview of the CCLRT's impact on the University and surrounding community so that they could ask questions and identify any issues that required further attention by the committee. It was agreed that Tim Busse, departmental director, University Services, should be invited to speak to the committee about the overall CCLRT plan.

Professor Sheldon informed the committee that this was his last meeting as chair, but he would remain on the committee. He then introduced David Golden as the new chairperson and thanked the committee members for their work.

Hearing no further business, Mr. Sheldon adjourned the meeting.

Dawn Zugay
University Senate Office