

Minutes*

Faculty Consultative Committee Thursday, August 3, 1995 9:00 - 12:00 Room 238 Morrill Hall

Present: Carl Adams (chair), John Adams, Carole Bland, Victor Bloomfield, Lester Drewes, Dan Feeney, Virginia Gray, James Gremmels, Kenneth Heller, Robert Jones, Morris Kleiner, Geoffrey Maruyama, Harvey Peterson, Michael Steffes

Others: Maureen Smith (University Relations)

[In these minutes: appointments to various groups; KIOSK; re-engineering; completion of U2000; issues for the year]

1. Morris Trip

Professor Adams convened the meeting at 9:00, reviewed the agenda, and then explained what he proposed for the Committee's trip to the Morris campus in September. He turned to Professor Gremmels to outline the events on the campus and who would meet with the Committee. The general theme of the conversations will be "if the Morris campus is to prosper, what are its needs?" Committee members spent a short time discussing the kinds of questions it would be proper to consider and those it would not; they also talked about the financial status of the Morris campus and its relationships with Twin Cities programs.

2. Appointments

Professor Adams next mentioned a number of personnel matters.

KIOSK: Professor (John) Adams, as FCC chair, wrote a regular column for KIOSK; he said he (Professor Carl Adams) would prefer that this responsibility be divided between the chair and vice chair of FCC and the chairs of the Educational Policy, Faculty Affairs, and Finance and Planning Committees.

Mention of KIOSK sparked a discussion of the purpose and usefulness of the publication itself. Several Committee members expressed a preference for a publication with fewer but longer articles, such as FOOTNOTE had; it was said that KIOSK was superficial. Sentiment also appeared to favor fewer publications, with longer articles (such as the alumni magazine), and that it be settled for awhile what is to be published. One Committee member commented that if the communication is to be faculty to faculty, the content must be what faculty are interested in, such as issues that concern the well-being of the University. The question of delivery of KIOSK also arose; some Committee members professed having only rarely seen it.

*These minutes reflect discussion and debate at a meeting of a committee of the University of Minnesota Senate or Twin Cities Campus Assembly; none of the comments, conclusions, or actions reported in these minutes represent the views of, nor are they binding on, the Senate or Assembly, the Administration, or the Board of Regents.

Ms. Smith commented on several factors related to the publication of KIOSK: magazines such as that produced by the alumni association are very expensive and supported by dues; most agree that KIOSK needs more substance; that originally the faculty were going to write the articles, but that has not happened, so it has increased the workload in University Relations; KIOSK may have an impossible mission in that it is to provide more stories and more depth.

Mention was made of the possibility of shorter periodic distribution of information and articles by e-mail. One Committee member maintained that hypertext on the World Wide Web is precisely suited to the need to communicate information: there can be a short piece about a subject, and if one wishes to read at greater length about it, one clicks on the hypertext. Others noted that not all have access to the Web, although most will in the future. Some, it was pointed out, like to take the materials home to read.

There will be a review of KIOSK this month, one Committee member reported, and a decision must be made. The Committee must think about what is wanted; another said what must be thought about it is what the publication is trying to accomplish. It appears, summarized one Committee member, that it is not clear the faculty see KIOSK as adding value.

It was agreed that the future of KIOSK would be on the agenda at the next meeting.

PROFESSIONAL COMMITMENT: Professor Adams reported that he has agreed, at the request of Acting Vice President Brenner, to identify two or three individuals to work on developing a revised Professional Commitment policy. Committee members identified several faculty who might serve.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY COMMITTEE: There are also vacancies on the Academic Integrity Committee, which has a large agenda. Committee members suggested a number of names for Professor Adams to suggest to Acting Vice President Brenner.

FACULTY LEGISLATIVE LIAISON: Professor Kleiner's term as faculty legislative liaison is ended; Professor Adams invited suggestions of individuals who might replace him.

3. Status Report on Current Issues

Professor Adams next reported on the status of issues before the University.

RE-ENGINEERING He said he did not know a lot about this issue, but the University is preparing to do a significant re-engineering of support activities and a group will be assembled to move the process forward with Human Resources, Purchasing, Research Administration, and one other. Behind this effort there appears to be the idea that with re-engineering, the University can save 20 or 30% on the costs of the activities.

Whether or not, and how, the re-engineering takes place may be things upon which faculty will have strong feelings, Professor Adams said, and he promised to learn more about what was proposed. While the talk has been about support activities, it is hard to imagine that the same processes would not be extended to academic activities as well.

With a new finance vice president coming into office, said one Committee member, it makes sense to rethink what support units are doing. But faculty must keep an eye on the process, because there will be changes that affect how faculty do their work. The President is taking the lead, it was said, but there will probably be task forces that work with different parts of the University; the President should be asked about what is planned the next time he meets with the Committee.

It will be important to have good information provided to the committees, said another. The simple solution in the past has been to off-load work onto faculty and departments.

Re-engineering has a specific meaning, observed one Committee member, and it means not doing what is already being done. Drastic steps will be taken, and the changes should not be made by a small group. Professor Adams needs to inquire about what will go into the process. He agreed to do so, but pointed out that the timing will be a question, because the President may want to accomplish things in his last two years in office--and may get started before the new finance vice president is in place. That search, reported another Committee member, will be completed by October.

U2000 Professor Adams next reported that there will be completion activity on U2000. The President has concluded U2000 should not be abandoned, even though it did not come across as well as hoped internally; it also needs additional work for it to continue to be understood externally. He has appointed a working group to develop recommendations in three areas by September 15.

First, develop a one-page statement to capture the essence of U2000, to create a succinct image. Second, to sharpen up the goals and strategic directions of U2000 so they are output and enabling goals; at present they are not as clear as they could be. Third, and the major task, is to identify major issues and institutional positions that the President will take on behalf of the institution with the endorsement of the Board of Regents, in order to guide the administration in operationalizing the U2000 agenda.

The President has concluded that there has not been clear identification of the institutional issues and the positions to be taken; the original thought was that the units would do what would be needed to put U2000 in place after he provided a general vision and directions. There is a missing link, a statement of institutional position. For example, the institution should have, for strategic and competitive reasons, a clear academic profile of areas where the University will be recognized. The President might say there must be such a profile, what that would mean, and identify three or four elements that should be in it. At the same time, he could charge the provosts and chancellors to identify items that should also be in the profile.

This is reminiscent of the efforts of President Keller and Provost Benjamin, said one Committee member; why is a committee needed to develop the profile? The President is comfortable making a statement about elements of the profile on the boundaries, but with a new administrative structure in place, and a new chancellor at Duluth, he does not want to pre-empt that structure. Nor is he comfortable identifying what should be in such a profile by himself; he can describe what is needed and ask the system to produce the profile.

The faculty do not have the foggiest idea what is going on, said one Committee member, and they feel disenfranchised and puzzled. No one questions that the President and senior officers have the right to define priorities, but the process has been questioned. It appears that bio-medical engineering and the

Cancer Center are high priorities, but no one understands how they emerged in competition with other ideas.

There is not unanimity of views on this issue, Professor Adams said. Some advocate starting a long process to consider proposals in competition in order to identify the profile; others argue that the University has been talking about this kind of profile since the days of President Keller and that the administration should just act. In this circumstance, what it is appropriate for the President to do?

This has been talked about for a long time, said one Committee member; each time the President talks about specifics, the Committee has had an opportunity to ask about them. The recurring problem is that every time the administration and committees gets specific, a political reaction sets in to thwart the process. This is what happened with the Campbell Committee, which is not the way to proceed. But then the President laid out U2000 and invited suggestions to translate ideas into actions (e.g., through the clusters) and nothing was acted on. The deans and chairs do not feel authorized to assert their voice on behalf of the faculty and say, for instance, that the University has one of the best X fields in the country but that the output does not equal the sum of the parts. So who should decide? The administration does not; if the faculty are asked, there are 100 voices. The President has decided to edge toward specificity and ask the deans and provosts for proposals. The original message of the President was well-received, but the University is still too dispersed and moving in too many directions. The provosts are trying to change that, but little is happening in the colleges. The role of the Committee is to watch and ask hard questions, especially when asked. The faculty, however, are not getting the message.

They have not been asked, said one Committee member; if so, it was said, then there is a gap between the vice presidents and provosts, on the one hand, and the deans and department heads on the other. It is difficult to determine the proper institutional position, observed another Committee member, between trying to drive things versus inviting them.

An academic profile is a recipe for disaster, argued one Committee member. The problem is in the core, which no one wants to define. To say that the University will be outstanding in transplants or biomedical engineering is fine, but it is irrelevant to the main problems. Those are fine activities, but they have advocates; the University is a doughnut, a ring with nothing in the middle. The next step is not to develop a profile but to determine what the University cannot live without; those activities should be identified. The Campbell Committee tried to define them, but it had both positive and negative responsibilities.

The process is very important, contended another Committee member, just as it is with re-engineering. The faculty are not hesitant to help, but there is no mechanism for them to do so. Leaders need to be trained on how to develop a shared vision.

The legacy of recent years, said one Committee member, is that some are impatient for results, and talk of process quickly causes them to lose interest. Others say the past should be forgotten and time should be taken to use a process that works.

For the faculty to be on board, the department and center leadership must be a part of the process. When the leadership is under-supported, both financially and in training, the result is a problem. It has been said many times that the weak link is the leadership: people are thrust into positions in a

complicated environment and expected to get the work done without support. It is not surprising people throw up their hands. Then everyone wonders why the faculty are not connected to the process. In some quarters, such as the Academic Health Center, outside events are overtaking the University's ability to respond; if they do not move quickly, they will not survive. In other places, such as in the core, some of the most important things being done are not dramatic, but if long-term needs are not met, there could be even graver consequences.

4. Agenda Items

Professor Adams explained at this point that he had to leave, but invited Professor Gray to assume the chair and asked the Committee to identify the major issues it believed should be taken up during the year. Committee members enumerated the following issues.

1. Conversion to semesters. SCEP needs to take the lead; FCC should also be involved.
2. The implications of Responsibility Center Management, how it will be implemented, and the timetable. Finance and Planning needs to take the lead on this item.
3. Tenure, which is part of a larger set of issues around appointments, job security, and compensation. Professor (John) Adams reported that Senior Vice President Infante asked him to serve as the University's representative to a CIC committee working on issues of tenure, reviews, and appointments that all the institutions are confronting. This issue should be taken up by SCFA.
4. The evaluation of administrators was left unsettled. SCFA is working with Associate Vice President Carrier's office on the issues.
5. Evaluation of instruction, and specifically peer review. SCEP should take this up.
6. Compensation: there was the task force on compensation, the recommendations of which appear to have been ignored. There needs to be a report on what happened when the provosts were allowed to make independent decisions. There is also a need for a report on compliance with the Faculty Senate policy calling for faculty participation in the means of setting salaries; the policy appears not to be evenly implemented. A report to SCFA from Dr. Carrier is expected.
7. The status of the Dean of the Graduate School and Vice President for Research; will there be a search, and when?
8. Additional institutional critical measures will be presented. The consultative mechanisms for reviewing them is elaborate and well-established.
9. There is a need to address Judicial Committee procedures; the Committee should hear from David Ward and Ed Fogelman about any steps that need to be taken (if any).
10. Fallout from the Transition Advisory Committee report (on governance) needs to be considered. It was agreed that the timing is not appropriate for a governance task force, but governance within the provostal units needs attention.

11. The status of due process in the institution is an issue. There are concerns about how the Judicial Committee, the Grievance Committee, and the SSAB (under academic misconduct) do their business. It is clear that due process is not being served in colleges and departments; there are violations of rights but it is not clear where they should be dealt with. These problems may arise because people at the unit level are not trained to do their jobs, and mistakes start a costly process. Moreover, there are patterns in Judicial Committee cases; a study of 50 years of cases demonstrates that they are not distributed evenly across the University. There is also a balance between overly restrictive policies and no policies at all.
12. Faculty belief in the directions in which the institution is moving; they see another process, one that follows on R&R, Commitment to Focus, Strategy for Focus, and U2000. Even though planning should be dynamic, one never sees the end. Faculty don't buy into the process because they see more and more of the same; they only react when they see something that has a direct impact on them. They are not excited about U2000 because they think it may go nowhere.
13. There is a need to more clearly specify what it is the University is trying to do; if there is not a clear idea of what is being aimed for, and action to reach it, there will always be disappointment. This is typified in the recent difficulties of the administration in presenting the Board of Regents with measurable goals in academic areas.
14. There is a need to make a major commitment to training faculty and administrators; much is changing fast and people cannot keep up. Is the Committee willing to say this is an area where money should be committed? Right now there is no training to be a dean, it was said, except an occasional workshop. In many departments, the chair work is expected to take 2-3 hours a week, with the bulk of the work handled by the administrator. Some understand what is needed, and work 40 hours a week--and then work 40 hours a week at being a faculty member. This is not a proper expectation for the University. There is a need both for continued training and for a change in the way things are done; if the system is wrong, all people do is pick up the pieces.
15. The question of "double dippers" should be taken up by SCEP. A recent article in the CHRONICLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION noted an increase in the number of students who enroll at a university but take a significant number of courses at area community college, both to beef up their grade average and because those courses are cheaper. What does it mean to be a student at the University of Minnesota?
16. The divergence between policy and practice, in a large number of areas. The Committee should point out instances where there are discrepancies.
17. The effort to matching budgeting to spending may expire with Senior Vice President Erickson's departure. Responsibility Center Management may force such budgeting, however, and tracking what happens is more difficult because it is no longer controlled by central administration.
18. The use of technology in education in future years. SCEP should take this up. What may be coming soon is a discussion of a proposal from Disney/ABC to buy Harvard. There will be universities on the Internet; what are the implications for the University? There already are

institutions on the Internet, and a California HMO is seeking to buy the Medical School of the University of Hawaii. But these institutions will not support research or offer doctoral programs; the University has had complicated cross-subsidies to support activities it wished to engage in; those are going away. The real issue for the administration will be the allocation of subsidies.

19. Communication.

Professor Gray thanked her colleagues for compiling the list and adjourned the meeting at 11:45.

-- Gary Engstrand

University of Minnesota