

Minutes *

**Faculty Consultative Committee
Leap Day, 1996
10:00 - 12:00
Room 238 Morrill Hall**

- Present: Carl Adams (chair), John Adams, Carole Bland, Victor Bloomfield, Lester Drewes, Dan Feeney, Virginia Gray, Roberta Humphreys, Robert Jones, Geoffrey Maruyama, Fred Morrison, Michael Steffes
- Regrets: James Gremmels, Laura Coffin Koch, Harvey Peterson
- Absent: none
- Guests: Provost C. Eugene Allen; Professor Craig Swan (President, University of Minnesota Faculty Association)
- Others: Kim Isenberg (Regents' Office), Martha Kvanbeck (University Senate), Maureen Smith (University Relations)

[In these minutes: Discussion with Provost Allen about the new structure, the biological sciences, land-grant philosophy and outreach, organizational issues confronting the University, and the budget; tenure and the legislature, and the process of tenure code change; provostal governance; biweekly payroll.]

1. Discussion with Professional Studies Provost C. Eugene Allen

Professor Adams convened the meeting at 10:05 and welcomed Provost Allen; Provost Allen said he had no prepared remarks and would be glad to respond to questions.

"How's it going?" was the first. Dr. Allen said that was a fair question. He has been in office a year now, and said it went well. It was fun to work with five new units and integrate issues with five units that he was very familiar with. He said he felt good about the year, in that many who were dubious about the combination of units in Professional Studies have been complimentary about the new opportunities and linkages.

It has been fun, but it has also been a difficult year. He has had no change in staff, and with five new units reporting to him, some people have been buried in work. He noted that Professor Maruyama will join his office in March as vice provost.

All of the Committee members are interested in the provostal structure, observed Professor Adams, and how campus and institutional issues--those that are cross-provostal--are addressed. There has been activity among the provosts, and with the President, but most people are not aware of it.

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Provost Allen agreed. The new structure has required a restructuring of meetings in central administration. The three provosts have weekly meetings, so are together regularly to deal with issues and share ideas. The provosts also meet regularly with the President, and those discussions are critical to where the University is heading and what is being heard, both from inside and out. There are also monthly meetings that include the vice presidents, and the provosts, chancellors, and vice presidents all meet in conjunction with the monthly meetings of the Board of Regents. Dr. Allen said he could think of no major disagreements between the three provosts; they have worked very well together.

Are institutional agenda items being identified and driven by the provosts, asked one Committee member? Dr. Allen noted that Provost Shively has over-arching responsibility for undergraduate education, semesters, liberal education, the undergraduate experience, residential college, and so on, while his position includes over-arching responsibility for outreach and for the St. Paul campus.

For example, he recently hosted a gathering of 65 people to brainstorm about outreach programs. Nationally, many institutions have concluded that their success is tied to outreach programs, as is funding, and that these in turn are tied to translating and transferring research out of the University. This can be summed up by the word "accountability," he said. Americans are concerned about social and environmental issues, and research universities have the opportunity to play a role in addressing these issues.

One Committee member inquired about the reorganization of the biological sciences. All three provosts have discussed this, Dr. Allen told the Committee. While the cluster planning never worked out, one "cluster" that has worked is the Deans of the Biological Sciences Council, which has met for several years. The provosts have worked with the Council, and with faculty, because a review of the biological sciences on the Twin Cities campus is a must; the University must do something different from what it is doing. The process in the biological sciences is several steps ahead of what should be going on in other areas of the campus.

This is an interesting set of organizational interactions, observed one Committee member--people want the process to be driven from the bottom up, but the situation is so confusing that there is a need for leadership on the part of the deans and the provost to break logjams. Is there a logjam now?

Dr. Allen said he thought not. The process is moving along well; there have been tough questions, but they are being faced. He said he has strong views about the class schedule, for instance; biology courses should not be listed under all the departments they are in. They should be listed under biology. That would be more user-friendly. He recalled that when he was advising students, there were five entry-level microbiology courses, and he would challenge anyone to find three of them. Students cannot find the courses they need, he said. This would be a simple problem to correct, and he would welcome the perspective of the biology faculty.

One Committee member said Dr. Allen had done a very good job with outreach across the state, especially with the extension service. It was pointed out that the Medical School and Hospital would benefit from work with extension; has there been any movement to make that happen, to help the medical community solidify relations with outstate Minnesota?

When they reinvented the Minnesota Extension Service (MES), Dr. Allen said, at the core was the goal that MES would be an open door to a greater part of the University; they now have relationships with 14 colleges and campuses. It is also very important to recognize that outreach is delivered in a number of ways, such as through CEE, MES, and others, and what works for some things will not work for others.

Dr. Allen said that in the original land-grant institutions--the agricultural and mechanical schools--the outreach part of the "mechanical" never worked. General information is frequently not what is needed in dealing with a start-up technical firm; they have a product and need to consult on it. This may also be proprietary information that must be protected. At the other extreme is the work in families, natural resources, and so on, that is very open. The Outreach Council developed a taxonomy of eight categories of outreach at the University.

One Committee member commented on the issue of bulletins; the idea of having all the courses listed in one place is a good one, but a caution about quality control is necessary. There may be a lot of courses in biology that would not count for the Medical School, and the same is true in other fields.

That can be indicated in the listings, Dr. Allen responded. Courses can be labeled in terms of liberal education requirements, etc. In a day when education must be broadened, there must be less concern about departments keeping students and more encouragement for students to take advantage of the rich curriculum of the University. The quality control issue can be addressed.

Rather than think about this as a hardcover book, added another Committee member, it can be thought of as a database that can be queried, if it is set up right. That is not now done; the University could do a LOT better job in this respect, because there are many different ways people might want to query such a database. Such as getting on a screen all the courses that qualify for a certain liberal education requirement, Dr. Allen said.

Asked what effect the reorganization of the biological sciences would have on the Duluth programs, Dr. Allen said he was not sure there would be any. The Twin Cities is trying to bring coherency to its programs; the biological sciences here are less than the sum of their parts. Dr. Allen suggested that those associated with the Duluth program who have concerns should talk with Dean Elde.

One Committee member said one gets the impression that on the general issue of dealing with institutional issues through the provostal structure, there is issue identification, assignment, and responsibility, but many people are not aware of that. The concern about balkanization is being addressed, but not in a way that people know of it. It would be wise for the University to make that known.

When one thinks about where the University is heading in program redesign, it is clear that the idea of the academic department is changing, as is the idea of program agendas, for everything from undergraduate majors to Ph.D. programs. If one tries to think about where the University needs to be in ten years, and where the organization is now, one doesn't know where that will take units in the core areas of the Arts and Sciences. When one hears about changes in different fields, it is evident that the boundaries between disciplines are not clear. Departments have been built; that is where faculty live. But they seem to be an artifact; they make life possible but do not serve the interests of what Dr. Allen

has been talking about. He talked about the parts not adding up to the whole; that is true for U2000 as well. What rhetoric will encourage faculty to get the job done?

There are several things embedded in that issue, Dr. Allen responded. As a result of years of downsizing the institution, including faculty, there are too many units. The Twin Cities campus is divided into too many parts, including departments. One must pause and ask the question just raised; some units are not at a critical size they need to be in order to do business and hire the talent they need. Action should be taken, and there should be administrative savings as a result.

The second issue, he said, is that the biological sciences are a microcosm of what the University should do, as he mentioned earlier. It would strengthen the University if course offerings and the curriculum were done by everyone in the field, irrespective of their department. It cannot be expected that everyone in a discipline will be in the same department, but that should not prevent them from working together, for example, on the change from quarters to semesters.

Third, there are models around the University to look at. In IT, administrative services are within departments. Education went a different direction, and services are provided at the college level (e.g., accounting). Dr. Allen repeated his view that the campus is divided in too many ways, and the divisions all create potential barriers. If this is not reviewed, it leaves too much money in administration and requires cutting the core--faculty.

Undergraduate education is not the major problem in the biological sciences, said one Committee member; building a research faculty that can identify and grab the major new research efforts is. One obstacle is that there is significant amounts of biology in all three provostries; each goes its own way and there is no coordination among them. The Cancer Center is hiring faculty and has an endowed chair, but it is not connected with the major directions of modern biology; it is very applied.

Is this a factor of geography or organization, asked another Committee member? Both, it was said; the geography of the two campuses and the separateness of the Academic Health Center, true here as elsewhere. The College of Biological Sciences is shrinking, and has no money to invest in the future of biology (such as in new equipment). The Medical School has the money, and CBS uses the equipment, but there is little collective talk about where the units are going and no coordination of research or the undergraduate teaching mission.

This is a complex conversation, observed another Committee member, and all organizations struggle with it. In some cases, the organization wants units to have freedom to go their separate ways; in others not. There is no one solution. The point is that there must be an ongoing conversation about these problems; where is it occurring?

The committees of the Senate all have their agendas, it was noted, and deal with small problems; the big problem is hard to get into and gets swept aside by brushfires. Forward planning is the major issue. That is the number one topic for the provosts, Dr. Allen told the Committee.

It flows from U2000, said one Committee member, but what is the next step? There is a dance going on: the President says one thing and hopes for faculty suggestions; the faculty say "where do you want to go?" But if one ASSERTS an agenda, the heavy artillery comes out!

There is no better example of the issues that revolve around a land-grant, research university than in the biological sciences, Dr. Allen said. It would help, said one Committee member, if he could cite three more examples, to broaden the conversation. Dr. Allen promised to do so within the next month.

One Committee member recalled that Provost Shively has been saying that there is a lack of academic planning in the core arts and sciences across provostries. The study of the biological sciences is a first step, but it should not occur in a vacuum, when there are no other studies of the arts and sciences. Faculty would participate in an effort to do so. To look at the biological sciences independently of the rest of the arts and sciences could lead to problems in the future.

This is always a question, said one Committee member: whether to get some solutions, perhaps suboptimal, while thinking about what is globally optimal. This is important, and the leadership needs to stimulate a conversation about it.

One Committee member agreed with the need for disciplinary interactions and horizontal activity, and the need for a leadership role in identifying areas to be involved in in the future. History tells something about effective groups, it was said, whether athletic teams, platoons, or departments; there are optimal sizes and ways to get the most out of people. An assistant professor needs to know what he or she must do to be successful and effective. When one talks about connections across colleges and campuses, that is confusing. One cannot lose sight of what has been successful: departments.

Organizations have wrestled with these questions for hundreds of years, said another Committee member, and they do things different ways. The world is changing, and it is important that faculty deal with that; organizational structures that worked in the past may not work now.

Dr. Allen was asked again about the biological sciences. He repeated that they are an excellent example of research at a land-grant university. Everyone should realize that only three or four institutions can compare with Minnesota in their comprehensiveness in the biological sciences, and the University must be careful in deciding who it should look like. There is the biological sciences core, and then dimensions related to human health and to agriculture and the environment. In many universities, the biological sciences are a much simpler issue; it must be remembered that this is a research and land-grant university.

It is true that few are like Minnesota, it was said in response, but there is a lot of concern about biology (e.g., the NRC rankings, whether or not the University can keep up). There is a bigger pool of institutions that Minnesota is competing with--Johns Hopkins, Harvard, etc.--that has different configurations. There is more competition and a bigger pool than configuration alone would suggest.

Dr. Allen agreed, but pointed out that the faculty at Minnesota competed very well for grants, in financially tight times, and one must be careful not to attach more significance to rankings than they are due. Many fields were not ranked, and in many that were, Minnesota ranked high.

That is true, it was said. But the period when research universities were supported by federal funds has passed, and when it is more difficult to obtain money, success will depend on reputation and the type of colleagues one has. The field will narrow, and the University could lose out.

One Committee member recalled hearing from two different people in the legislature that the University has "too much of everything and not enough of anything." That was a negative comment on the University's comprehensiveness. The point about losing out says the University must be strategic in what it emphasizes, so it is not nibbled to pieces. How does the judgment about focus come about? By what mechanism? There have, moreover, been repeated conversations in this Committee that Finance and Operations seems peculiarly unconnected with the academic mission conversations and decisions; the academic units cannot count on the support of the bureaucracy to help the University get where it needs to.

What has not been said, although implied, said one Committee member, is the extent to which the market may determine things, no matter what the University does. The chaired professor in cancer is where it is because of money. Professional programs in the future may have more and more money, because that is where the money is, and they will direct funds into areas they need. The institution will be less in a position to direct funds, and the market will say where they will go.

That is a recipe, remarked one Committee member, for a university that is all periphery and no core.

It is, however, an issue the University must come to grips with, it was said. If it does not want that to come about, it must do something to position the institution so the market cannot dictate to it.

Compensation is a hot topic right now, said one Committee member; everyone wants a lot of money, but no one has any. Dr. Allen was asked if he had any thoughts on the subject. There is no denying that there are needs--both by units and for the institution--but there is no easy apparent solution.

Dr. Allen said he was about half way through budget hearings, and he has met with the deans; what was just said is true. Many deans have had meetings with chairs and heads and with faculty, and they maintain it must be recognized that there is no doubt there are significant salary problems for the faculty, but that support for faculty in the programs is also important. Many deans have been told by the faculty that they do not want to lose any more support just to get a salary increase. In a time of tight budgets, there have to be changes, systems put in place, so salary dollars can be obtained. There are units that could NOT deliver a 4% salary increase, if told to do so; one said his unit would have to declare bankruptcy if it had to provide 4% salary increases.

Dr. Allen concluded by noting that there will in the future be provostal consultative committees, but said he would also like to meet more often with this Committee than he has been. Professor Adams thanked him for joining the meeting.

2. Tenure and the Legislature

Professor Adams next welcomed Professor Craig Swan to the meeting to discuss recent events in the legislature related to tenure. It was agreed that this portion of the meeting would be off the record.

Professor Swan explained briefly the history of the University of Minnesota Faculty Association

(UMFA), which represents faculty views at the legislature. UMFA does not get involved in on-campus activities, nor does it comment on building requests; it deals with issues of concern to the faculty as a whole.

Professor Swan then spent about half an hour describing the events at the Capitol, discussions about tenure, legislator views on tenure, and legislative and committee debates on tenure.

After all of this, asked one Committee member, what next? It is clear, said another, that there are serious problems with some members of the legislature that the University must work on. The Chair of the Board of Regents, Regent Reagan, has said he intends to work on them; he has said he has no problem if the faculty work independently to restore the University's credibility with the legislature. There were a lot of misconceptions that had to be addressed.

It is the case, said one Committee member, that many of the friends of the University at the legislature do not know what faculty do, even though they--the legislature--pay part of the bill.

How can they be educated, asked another Committee member? Professor Gray's column in the most recent issue of KIOSK is directly on point. What is External Relations doing about the situation? The faculty should at least write to the editor of the papers; an article in the February 29 St. Paul newspaper contains a lot of misinformation that needs to be corrected.

There is no doubt the newspaper coverage of the tenure issue affected the legislative debate, Professor Swan told the Committee. The faculty should take this into its own hands, to the extent it can, by at least writing its own editorials.

The worst fears of many faculty are that this is spilling over into the unionization movement, said another Committee member. The faculty have made promises to the legislature about the tenure code, and the legislators will ask about those promises. What was not mentioned was that if the unionization movement proceeds, the process for review of the tenure code is stopped dead when a cease and desist order is issued by the Bureau of Mediation Services.

This is somewhat like a political campaign, cautioned one Committee member: when one is being bashed, it is VERY difficult to defend oneself, and it is easy to do more damage. The faculty must deliver what IT thinks are the right modifications to the tenure code; if the faculty cannot do that, nothing said in any editorial will matter. The faculty cannot be diverted from their objectives and miss the main item: if they cannot deal with a reasoned review of tenure, and cannot do so in the next few months, the faculty will NOT BE CREDIBLE.

The legislators who are friends of the University must be given information so they can defend the University; they need reasons to be friends. They worry they are not electable if they stand up for the University. And this must be a long-term effort, added another Committee member, undertaken not just by External Relations but also by the faculty and their liaison.

One Committee member asked that issues of institutional relations, raised at both this meeting and the last one, be placed on the agenda of an FCC meeting in the near future. It was agreed this discussion should be limited to the Committee, but perhaps include Dr. Bognanno in the President's Office.

Professor Swan agreed with the earlier observation that the faculty are on the spot with respect to the legislature. Faculty representatives told the legislature the University has a process that could deal with changes in the tenure code that should be respected. Inside the University, there are a lot of people who have no idea what the faculty were talking about. Up until the email message from the Professors Adams to all the faculty about changes in the tenure code and the legislative testimony, they were right--they did NOT know. The only presentations had been oral, to small groups. Senate minutes do not get out for a long time. But for faculty members, the devil is in the details in the tenure code changes; those details must be shared as widely as possible and as soon as possible, Professor Swan said, so that what is being proposed is not misrepresented. It would be best if this Committee could help to keep the faculty informed, for the health of the institution.

Professor Morrison reported that he, along with Professor Feeney, Mr. Donohue in the General Counsel's office, and a lawyer from the Academic Health Center began working on drafts of changes to the tenure code. There are 13-14 separate amendments that are being prepared; some will be ready soon, some need policy choices made, and some are ready now. He affirmed that the changes are ones that have come from the John Adams tenure working group.

Professor (John) Adams agreed, and noted that the draft changes will go to the Tenure Subcommittee, chaired by Professor Mary Dempsey, then to the Committee on Faculty Affairs, then to this Committee, and then to the Faculty Senate. If the changes are adopted by the Faculty Senate, they are transmitted to the Board of Regents through the President. The working group has formulated ideas; the lawyers will draft language for the Tenure Subcommittee to begin work on. Professor Morrison also noted that they are working with Professors Adams and Feeney to be sure the amendments are consistent with the intent of the working group. If the lawyers cannot agree on what is intended, they develop two or three alternatives for discussion, he added.

Professor Adams, referring to Professor Swan's comments about the need for urgency, agreed, but said that the language of the proposed amendments will not be made public until it is in front of the Tenure Subcommittee. After it is delivered to the Subcommittee, it is hoped that the language will be reported out promptly.

After additional discussion of the language adopted by the House of Representatives, Professor Adams extended a heart-felt thanks to Professor Swan for his "heroic" work, saying that were it not for Professor Swan's finger in the dike, everyone would be swimming.

Professor Adams then reaffirmed the process that would be followed on amendments to the tenure code, noting that amendments would be brought to the Faculty Senate on April 18, brought again to the May meeting, and that additional meetings would be scheduled if necessary. He said he was also trying to get the word out that if the amendments are delivered to the Board of Regents in May or June, and the Board does not like them, they will be brought back to the faculty in the fall.

Professor Morrison noted that the April 18 Senate docket is going to be very full, and that the fourteen amendments to the tenure code will have to be discussed separately. None will be acted on at the first meeting, except perhaps for a few amendments that everyone will agree are housekeeping. He suggested that the language be circulated before the April Senate meeting, in order that people can offer

comments and criticisms, and then bring revised language in April. A second May meeting will probably be necessary, in any event. The Committee agreed that there would be an additional Faculty Senate meeting scheduled for May 30.

It was also agreed that before any language was circulated, it would be previewed with a group of people most likely to speak at the Senate meeting, in an attempt to identify problems and head off unnecessary objections.

3. Provostal Governance

Professor Adams then turned to Professor Gray to report on provostal governance to the students, who had joined what had become an extremely long FCC meeting. The provostal faculty consultative committees (PFCCs) will be established as subcommittees of FCC, exactly as proposed in the bylaw that failed of adoption in the Assembly because of a lack of a quorum. It was agreed that FCC members would submit to the Committee on Committees possible nominees for the PFCCs (in addition to whatever other names the Committee on Committees might consider), with an election to be held the first week of spring quarter.

4. Biweekly Payroll

Professor Adams reported that he had put this item back on the agenda because the Senate Committee on Faculty Affairs had recently adopted a resolution opposing the change to the biweekly payroll. Professor Feeney noted that no action by this Committee had been requested; it was simply a unanimous statement by SCFA that it did not support the change. Copies were sent to the senior officers in order that they would have a sense of faculty resistance to the change. The DELAY is the issue, he emphasized, not the biweekly payroll itself.

One Committee member related having been in a meeting with people from Finance and Operations about this, and every suggestion the faculty made was met with resistance or excuse. For them it was a matter of rules, regulations, and tables; for the faculty, it was a matter of how people felt.

One Committee member said they were told the administration was tired of dealing with the politics of the issue; the faculty told the administrators that the politics were at least as big as the finances. It is not a good idea to put in place something if they cannot sell it. The rationale for one payroll system is understandable; the question is always about the delay.

Some of the problem would be solved if people were paid over twelve months rather than nine, said one Committee member, and added that not all members of the administration think this is a good idea, either.

The idea of the faculty and staff making a loan to the University is inappropriate, said another Committee member; the administration either needs to make reasonable arrangements or not make the change at all.

Another reason not to make the change at all is because the degree of trust in the administration, and faculty morale, is the lowest it has ever been on a lot of issues; this is something that people will face

when they start the next school year and will be one more thing to make them unhappy. It is politically the WRONG time to do this.

The University has a reputation for never making changes, especially in the legislature, said another Committee member; if one can get past the political issues, there is a reason this kind of issue surfaces during the re-engineering process. If the University can make the change, it should just do it. It is unfortunate, commented another Committee member, that the first product of re-engineering is this change, which people see as an attack on them.

This should be put back on the table, said one Committee member, and the change should not be made unless people can be held cash-flow neutral. If that can be achieved, fine; if not, the change should not be made.

What will be the cost of administering 4,000 interest-free loans, asked one Committee member--the present proposal to help people during the transition. If the administration cannot justify the proposal, it should not make the change, it was said.

Even though the Committee on Faculty Affairs resolution did not call for action, it nonetheless calls for action, Professor Adams said, because it is a significant statement from a Senate Committee. Committee members discussed the cash-flow issue, the possibility of making the change when the switch to semesters occurs, and related issues.

It was suggested that FCC, given the strong concerns it has heard, express support for the biweekly payroll system change but insist that the administration find ways to provide those affected with a cash flow equal to that of the current system at no cost.

Upon vote taken, all but one member of the Committee favored the statement contained in the preceding paragraph.

One Committee member expressed dismay that this was still a topic of discussion. There are a dozen different ways to deal with the problem; one could front-load raises, for example. The conclusion is that this is a good idea and the change should be made, and it is annoying to have to fuss about the cash-flow problem when there are a number of devices that could be used to deal with it.

5. Policy on Minutes

One Committee member, expressing agreement with it, asked that the subject of Professor Purple's letter to the DAILY be taken up. Professor Purple urged that the anonymity of the minutes be dropped, and that speakers be identified by name.

One Committee member pointed out that FCC has discussed this a number of times, and that while Professor Purple's point is a good one, the Committee has always concluded that anonymity is preferable in order to foster free discussion. Anyone, it was noted, is free to ask to be on the record about any statement he or she makes.

It was noted that the initial reason for making the minutes anonymous was because when they were

not, individual FCC members received calls from members of the Board of Regents and administrators complaining about what they had said at meetings.

Anonymity of the minutes is not the right response, it was argued; FCC members should make it known if they receive calls about what they say, and should complain to the President.

The problem, said another Committee member, is that everyone will go into "reporter-speak" at the meetings, and there will be less discussion of issues.

Senior officers have taken exception to statements that appear in the minutes, recalled one Committee member, because the statements were incorrect but were not corrected; most people would be upset about that. Nonetheless, the discussion will be better if it is not for the record, it was concluded.

One must be sensitive to colleagues who are upset and want to know who said what, it was maintained. Why, rejoined another Committee member, is it important to know WHO said something? Because FCC members are elected representatives, it was said. But the meetings are open for anyone to attend, it was noted.

FCC members are representatives of people who vote, and who need to know what was said. One can only know that if one talks to people who were at the meetings. But one does not want people not saying what they think, or have to worry about recriminations.

There is enough that is already off the record at these meetings, and there are multiple values in conflict, Professor Adams noted. Every time the Committee has discussed this issue, it has concluded that anonymity is the better policy, even though the Committee is not fully comfortable with it. It is, however, the best it can do. If all statements are to be attributed, then everyone must approve the minutes, which will delay them for weeks. It is not an easy call, but it is the one the Committee has made.

Professor Adams then adjourned the Faculty Consultative Committee meeting at 12:40 and immediately convened the Senate Consultative Committee.

-- Gary Engstrand