

Minutes *

Faculty Consultative Committee
Thursday, October 20, 1994
12:00 - 4:00
Room 626 Campus Club

- Present: John Adams (chair), Thomas Burk, Sheila Corcoran-Perry, Lester Drewes, Dan Feeney, Virginia Gray, James Gremmels, Kenneth Heller, Roberta Humphreys, Robert Jones, Morris Kleiner, Geoffrey Maruyama, Gerhard Weiss
- Regrets: Carl Adams
- Absent: Michael Steffes
- Guests: George Copa, Darwin Hendel, Jane Whiteside (all Academic Affairs), Senior Vice President E. F. Infante, Professor Fred Morrison
- Others: Rich Broderick, Maureen Smith (University Relations), Martha Kvanbeck (University Senate)

[In these minutes: Critical measures; (with Dr. Infante:) academic freedom, administrator reviews, various topics; research climate resolution; academic freedom; report of the Blue Ribbon Committee on Teaching and Learning]

1. Critical Measures

Professor Adams convened the meeting at 12:15 and welcomed Drs. Copa, Hendel, and Whiteside to discuss critical measures. He asked that they outline where the process stands, what the Regents will approve, and the consultation that will take place within the University.

[A note on usage in these minutes and in the discussion of critical measures: measures are the subject of concern--e.g., characteristics of entering students, amount of sponsored research funding; goals are the specific numbers attached to the measures--e.g., 80% of entering freshmen on the Twin Cities campus will be from the top quartile of their high school class.]

Dr. Copa reviewed the development of the critical measures, beginning with the charge from the Board of Regents in January, and where they now stand. There are 18 measures (areas or subjects to measure), to assess progress in implementation of U2000; five of the measures have some of the specific goals already developed. Goals for another eight of the measures are to be developed this year; the goals for the remaining five will be identified later.

Committee members cautioned that care must be taken in the use of the numbers. Some of the

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measures are more susceptible to boiling down to numbers than are others. The Board was clear, Dr. Copa said, in saying it wanted measures to make U2000 specific and to permit accountability in moving toward the goals. There must be agreement, it was said, on what the numbers mean.

In terms of what the Regents will vote on, Dr. Copa reported, the resolution on the October docket was not taken up; the budget discussion pre-empted other items. In November the Board will act, and has directed the administration to present it with a small set of goals which it can adopt. For the first five measures, 69 numbers (goals) have been established (and the goals for those five measures are not yet complete); this is a very complex matter, he pointed out, and it would be very difficult for a group such as the Board to debate each number.

Inasmuch as the Board wishes to act on a small set of goals, perhaps one for each measure, the administration is now trying to identify what the appropriate goals for that small set would be. Committee members expressed considerable dismay at the possibility that goals for each of the campuses, for example, might be averaged (which could mean the Twin Cities goals will be the goals the Board acts on, simply because of the weight of numbers). Dr. Copa pointed out that the Board has already acted on two numbers, the 50% graduation rate after five years and the 80% of freshmen out of high school on the Twin Cities campus to come from the upper quartile of their graduating class. Committee members pointed out that each campus has a different mission, goals, education, and students, and to mix them together will lead to meaningless statistics. Such mixing even takes place on the Twin Cities campus; one number might make sense for Morris, but that is less true for the Twin Cities.

There has been discussion of the separate campuses, Dr. Copa commented; the idea is to keep parsimonious the numbers acted on by the Board. It will be up to the administration to worry about the differences between the campuses.

Discussion turned briefly to the goals for sponsored research. Dr. Copa observed that one cannot be optimistic about the national picture; the goal is an increase of 5% in funding and ranking of 15th among peer institutions--about where it is now. There is a group of universities getting much more competitive for federal funding, he said, and the University will do well to maintain its current position.

There is a danger, with these kinds of goals, that they could drive the institution inappropriately. The University could choose to de-emphasize or eliminate programs that do not bring in research funds, and put all its resources into those that do, in order to meet the goals. English, it was pointed out, may bring in a lot of money for an English department, but not very much in the overall picture of external funding, so might be jeopardized if this goal supplants other considerations. That could happen if this process of setting and striving to achieve the goals is mindless, Dr. Copa agreed.

In terms of under-represented groups, in response to a question Dr. Whiteside replied that there is no way to express the goals in one number. There are portions that deal with entering students, with graduation rates, and with faculty and staff; it may be necessary for the Board to consider three or four numbers in this measure. Asked about the philosophy that underlies the use of the four identified groups, Dr. Whiteside said the University reports a lot of information on these groups, and the President has an advisory group for each one. They are, however, culturally invented and self-reinforcing, it was said; Dr. Whiteside commented that the goals were specified in ways consistent with previous regental actions. The larger question is what the University's view should be about under-represented groups; Asians, for

example, do not see themselves as one group. What is the University's view to be? Is it endorsing a notion that some find abhorrent, and translating it into policy goals? These categories take on a life of their own. In research, for example, if the goal is to increase external research funding, the University could go after the easiest money, but not accomplish its desired outcomes. The issue of diversity is fraught with great difficulty. The work done thus far on it, it was said, has been thoughtful.

The consultation process was used in selecting the 18 measures and is now being used in developing the goals. There will be a discussion of the critical measures at the November 3 Senate meeting. Dr. Copa said they would appreciate advice on how to interact with the Senate and its committees.

Dr. Hendel reviewed who they would be meeting with in development of the goals for the next eight measures. The timing last year was such that they came to committees with something drafted; this year nothing has been drafted for the eight measures and they would like to work with Senate committees and others to develop the goals. It was noted that the Finance and Planning Committee should be included in the discussions; several other suggestions for Senate committee inclusion were also made. Dr. Copa also described how coordinate campus views would be obtained.

One Committee member inquired how these measures would be used; will there be reports every year on how well the University is doing on the 18? The process has only started, Dr. Hendel observed, and is long-term. It must be clear that planning, budgeting, and these performance measures are linked in ways that make sense. Asked if the numbers will be generated automatically, or if a staff will be required, Dr. Copa said that some of the numbers exist now while others will have to be developed because there are not now in place processes to consider them. Development of the measures will have to be cost-effective for the University. In some cases, he added, the University is being required to report the information anyway, such as the post-graduate experiences of students, so it will have to be developed whether or not there are critical measures.

Asked how the deans and department chairs will be involved, Dr. Copa said they have been in several ways already and will continue to be involved.

One Committee member inquired what the role of the Faculty Senate should be. Dr. Infante had joined the meeting at this point and said he believed a reasonable approach was being taken, that the measures are complicated--simple ones would be meaningless--and that they should not be set in concrete. It is for that reason that the administration believes the Board should vote on the measures, not on the goals. The Board, however, believes it should vote on some of the goals, so an appropriate set is being developed. Were he a senator, Dr. Infante commented, he would want to understand the measures and goals, and to comment on them, but would not want to vote on the specific goals.

The state, he reported, is so impressed with the measures the University is developing that they have asked the University's permission to give them not only to the other higher education systems but also to other state agencies.

The Faculty Senate, then, should make a statement that it approves the measures and supports the process being used to develop them, it was said. After brief discussion, it was agreed without dissent that the Faculty Senate should vote on the process and the measures and indicate that it does not want the

goals reified. This, it was said, should contribute to faculty comfort with the process and with the numbers.

Professor Adams thanked Drs. Copa, Hendel, and Whiteside for joining the meeting.

2. Discussion with Senior Vice President Infante

Professor Adams then reviewed a list of items that have come across his desk in recent days: concern with the process of reviewing administrators; the policy on academic freedom; internal consulting; the role of the professional schools in undergraduate education under the reorganized central administration; and the sale of the Minnesota Supercomputer Center to Cray.

On the question of academic freedom, Professor Adams recalled that he had been asked by the Office of the Board of Regents to advise them on revision of the policies on academic freedom (there are three: 1938, 1963, 1971). The request came because the Board now regularly reviews its policies on a three-year cycle, and this is the year that the academic freedom policies came up for review. He related that he had consulted with a group of wise colleagues about the three policies; the consensus view had been that the 1938 statement should be improved upon and the other two policies discarded, because the latter two contained considerable political baggage that was not essential to a regental policy on academic freedom. In consultation with colleagues, he drafted a revision of the 1938 statement, which was reviewed by the Senate Consultative Committee earlier this month.

As the President, Dr. Infante, and others thought about the policy, however, they felt it was essential to be very careful about the revision and to do it slowly and right. Students and others have also been heard from, meanwhile, about the impact of the policy on them. He asked Dr. Infante, as a result, to explain to the Committee what he thought would be the appropriate manner in which to proceed.

Dr. Infante began by saying that he believed this to be the MOST important policy statement on the books for a university. He said he wanted to be sure that all have the opportunity to participate in the discussion, and that he would like a group of distinguished faculty, including legal scholars, to look at it. He wants students to feel good about it. In addition, he said, he would like the statement to be poetic, something the University can be proud of. For these reasons, he does not want the process of review and approval to go too fast. He has asked that Regents' action on the policy be delayed until the internal deliberation is completed.

Is there a reason to do nothing, inquired one Committee member? The Committee has been asked to advise on revision, but is it better to let a sleeping dog lie? That may not be the responsible thing to do, but there may be an argument for doing so.

One Committee member maintained that academic freedom is an issue and that the review should occur--and not with legal scholars. The policy, it was said, should be drawn from a perspective of naivete, not devotees of controversy. The U.S. Constitution is a naive document, in this sense; the academic freedom policy should address the spirit of the issue, not the controversies of the moment. Another agreed that it should not read like a series of statutes.

Dr. Infante pointed out that this is a Regents' policy: it should be short, simple, and not cause

problems. The existing policies could cause problems. By comparison, the University has six statements on diversity--that situation is unappealing and the result is disjointed.

It was agreed to hold over until later in the meeting the completion of the discussion of the academic freedom policy; Dr. Infante turned next to the biennial request. He reported that the new request (as increased by the Board of Regents, from a \$77 million increase to \$87 million) was presented to the Department of Finance, and from all appearances was well-received. He affirmed that \$6 million of the proposed increase would be used for salaries and \$4 million used to reduce tuition increases.

Asked if requesting money for salaries might turn out to be no gain if the state decided to deliver inflationary increases to everyone, Dr. Infante said he believed the University has a strong argument for funding for U2000--and that if it turns into a request for salaries and tuition reduction, the University will not come out well.

The questions about reviews of administrators, Dr. Infante recalled, were discussed at some length by the Committee a few years ago, and changes were subsequently made in the procedures. The one constant is the legal issues: Neither he nor a review committee is permitted to receive anonymous communications, and anyone being reviewed has the right to see everything in the file. The only anonymous participation allowed is through surveys distributed to a group with the same questions on all of them. (And in one instance, Dr. Infante recalled, 1000 surveys were distributed and 25 returned; he knew he could not use those because the sample was too biased.) Some individuals feel strongly that they will not participate in reviews unless they are guaranteed anonymity. For his own review, he recalled, he designates three individuals to receive comments about his performance; they, in turn, summarize the comments and submit them as part of the review.

One Committee member observed pointedly, as have previous Committee members, that she will NOT write something, or go to an open meeting, and say critical things about a supervisor. No one will. If most people feel that way, the reviews are useless. Use of the intermediaries, such as with Dr. Infante's review, will only be successful to the extent people trust those chosen as intermediaries.

Another problem with the reviews, said one Committee member, is that no one knows what the results are. The Senate Committee on Faculty Affairs, Dr. Feeney reported, is going to look at the existing policies concerning reviews of administrators to see if they are being implemented.

On the matter of internal consulting, Dr. Infante related that he had picked three departments to study, and had looked at the W4 forms; they found there was considerable internal consulting. An example of internal consulting--which excludes teaching in CEE, for this purpose--might be the President asking the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs to take on the responsibility for institutional relations in the absence of a vice president; he, the Senior Vice President, tells the President that "sure, Mr. President, I'll do it for an additional \$20,000." (Dr. Infante hastened to assure the Committee this was an entirely fictitious example!) This kind of consulting occurs widely around the University, he said, and much of it is innocent. In some units, individuals are promised extra money if they will engage in certain activities, many of them quasi-administrative. The practice of internal consulting undermines salary-setting and needs to be examined. It will be, he said, an integral part of the "conflict of commitment" policy being developed. At the same time there is some concern, he said, that legitimate possibilities for internal consulting should not be foreclosed.

As for consulting on the sale of the Supercomputer Center, Dr. Infante said there was some restricted consulting; Professor Adams summarized the situation by noting that questions were raised, answers provided, and that there had been consultation with knowledgeable faculty, both on and off the Senate Committee on Computing and Information Systems. Committee members appeared to be satisfied with what had occurred.

With respect to professional schools and undergraduate education, Dr. Infante said, there is reason to be concerned. It is for that reason that he has continued to promote the idea of Responsibility Centered Management. Some faculty, who could provide excellent freshman and sophomore instruction, do not do so because they are in units that do not offer such courses. They may even want to do so, added a member of the Committee, but will be unable to do so under the new provostal organization.

Quite apart from undergraduate instruction, it was said, there are other activities that faculty are being discouraged from participating in because it does not bring in funding (such as IRBs). The same is true for undergraduate instruction and outreach--in some quarters of the University the view persists that if it doesn't produce a research paper, time should not be spent on it. The problem is one of incentives, both individual and organizational, which is why Responsibility Centered Management, with its defects, can help--it can provide the incentives.

One Committee member inquired what disposition had been made of the report produced by Anne Petersen's office, ENHANCING RESEARCH EFFECTIVENESS. Dr. Infante said that a number of its recommendations formed the basis for the biennial request.

On the issue of the budget, one Committee member inquired if the implications, at the grass roots, are that all departments will again be asked to retrench X%. The biennial request is not lavish, and one hopes the answer to the question is that across-the-board retrenchments will stop. Dr. Infante said he would argue that retrenchment has not been across-the-board, and some will say that the next budget will not be across-the-board ENOUGH. Asked if there is a way to ensure that deans will not impose across-the-board cuts, Dr. Infante replied that if they want to remain as deans, the answer is "yes."

Professor Adams thanked Dr. Infante for joining the meeting.

3. Resolution on the Research Climate

Professor Adams turned to Professor Feeny for discussion of a resolution forwarded by the Senate Committee on Faculty Affairs and the Senate Committee on Research. The point of the resolution, he explained, is that Senate Research Committee members last year adopted the resolution because they believe that the pressures to teach and engage in outreach activities will mean less time for research--thus pushing it to the summer and off-hours. There should be a statement, therefore, that faculty at a research university should be given time, as part of their appointment, to do research. The resolution culminated from a joint SCFA-SRC meeting last fall, although the SCFA approval was contingent on rewriting the resolution. There were no major changes made in it.

This year, SCFA reconsidered the resolution; while expressing support for the principle, it now found the wording unacceptable and withdrew its endorsement. Committee members agreed that there

should be reasonable time allowed to engage in scholarly activity, in light of the workload policy that was adopted by the Faculty Senate. The question is how to state it. Two members of SCFA felt very strongly about retaining the wording of the resolution as it stands.

Several Committee members acknowledged confusion about the intent of the resolution. It is NOT about the point that one can reduce research activity without losing one's job but that one will be called on the carpet if they try to decline to teach. What it is about, it was said, is that research needs to be fitted into the workload structure. The information that SCFA received, Professor Feeney reported, is that at least in one unit, faculty members could be assigned to 100% teaching--against their will--and this resolution was intended to point out that time must be permitted for research at a research university. The problem may be with the workload principles, it was suggested, or their implementation, but another statement is not required.

In another unit, it was reported, the problem is with the implementation of the workload policy, not the policy itself: the unit sees workload as a teaching load policy, because no one said anything about grants or articles or books--it is measuring the easiest thing to measure.

Professor Adams suggested that there are several questions that need to be answered: Is this a statement about the time needed to do research? Or that faculty SHOULD do research? Who does it cover? (Only assistant and associate professors, or all regular faculty?) Does the Committee wish to say anything on the subject?

The Committee concluded it did wish something to be said, and the point is not about the OBLIGATION to do research but to ENABLE faculty to do it. The reason is that administrative pressures--derived from the ability to measure teaching readily and reticence to attach numbers to artistic and scholarly endeavors--drives faculty not to do research on University time. This will become more serious in the next decade, said one Committee member, as the "number crunchers want to measure things."

It was agreed that the resolution would be returned to SCFA and the Senate Research Committee with a request that a new approach be taken, and that is to propose a modification of the workload principles, to include an explication of why the change is being proposed.

4. FacultyWrites

A question has been raised, Professor Adams announced, about whether or not to shut down "FacultyWrites," the electronic bulletin board for faculty discussions. Use of FacultyWrites has been very sporadic, and the quality of the contributions, in the view of some Committee members, leaves much to be desired. After short discussion, the Committee concluded it would not change FacultyWrites, but several Committee members opined that few now read it and no one will bother to do so unless it is put to considerably more constructive purposes.

On a related topic, it was agreed that all Duluth faculty members should receive FOOTNOTE, which they do not now.

5. Academic Freedom, Continued

Discussion returned to the issue of academic freedom. Professor Adams inquired of his colleagues what process should be used to prepare a document for the February Senate meeting, and what should then happen to ready a final document for action at the Spring meeting?

There appeared to be agreement that a draft document was needed, something that people could react to. One question is whether or not to continue working with the 1938 statement--bypassing the 1963 and 1971 documents--or to draft something new. The choice is strategic; it is risky to bring up the subject at all, and the Committee needs decide what the best way to do so is.

It was suggested that a very small group, of one-two people, should draft something. The Committee agreed it needed Thomas Jefferson, recognizing that it already had John Adams. Professor Adams said he would take the advice of the Committee and attempt to chart a course.

At this point Professor Adams recessed the Faculty Consultative Committee in order that the Senate Consultative Committee could meet to approve the University Senate docket and that the Twin Cities Assembly Steering Committee could approve the Assembly docket. The dockets were approved promptly, as was that of the Faculty Senate.

6. Report of the Blue Ribbon Committee

Professor Adams reconvened FCC and welcomed Professor Fred Morrison, chair of the Blue Ribbon Committee on Teaching and Learning (appointed last year by Professor Judith Garrard, chair of the Faculty Consultative Committee). Professor Adams reviewed the work of the Committee and then asked Professor Morrison for comments.

The Committee, he said, consisted of representatives of two groups, Regents Professors and McKnight Professors; since he was neither, he was made chair. The genesis of the Committee was the discomfort, at the December Senate meeting last year, with U2000 planning; the Committee was to review the progress of that planning. It never had a clear charge, except to meet with the President and discuss progress--a senior faculty group to advise him. The critical measures, for example, have been dealt with by Senate committees, so the Blue Ribbon Committee did not; rather, it conveyed faculty sentiments on general issues, because groups such as FCC and the Finance and Planning Committee are too pressed with the issues of the moment. Early on, the Committee met informally with the President, which helped to get issues on the table without a lot of publicity. He asked that the conversations continue.

After the informal discussions with the President, the Committee did not interfere with the work of Senate committees on specific issues. Moreover, the character of U2000 changed, and the planning associated with it seemed to move into more ordinary planning channels, so the Committee did not have a great deal to do. The President wishes to continue to meet with it, and those involved are sensitive to the make-up of the Committee (e.g., age, race, gender, field of study), so it maybe helpful to have a core group along with others invited to participate in a series of conversations with him.

Professor Morrison said he could prepare a report for the Faculty Senate to indicate the progress on U2000, the consultation that has occurred, the changes occurring, the effects of the lack of state

support, and so on. Beyond that, however, the Committee does not want to interfere with the normal governance process dealing with implementation of U2000--to do so could produce contradictory faculty advice and raises questions about the governance system itself.

The President found the conversations helpful, Professor Morrison said, and is disappointed at the level of faculty "buy in" to what is going on. He wishes to have faculty to talk to in a less formal way, to serve as a sounding board. Some of those who might serve in that capacity could be nominated by this Committee, he suggested.

He suggested that the Blue Ribbon Committee make a report at the February Faculty Senate meeting, but that no successor committee be named. The names of faculty he could call on, however, should be provided to the President. The groups could consist, for example, of one-half (6) of the existing Blue Ribbon Committee, perhaps another six younger faculty, and two or three administrators.

The Blue Ribbon Committee was an initiative undertaken in cooperation with the President's office. Once it had provided the help it could on U2000, the activity of the Committee became more a series of collective private conversations. If it is to be an official group, it should be more closely tied to FCC. Otherwise, it should remain a series of conversations with whomever the President wishes to speak--and it has always been the case that the FCC chair can advise the President on who should be included in such conversations.

Professor Morrison suggested that he give a report at the February Senate meeting, that they commend oversight of the process to FCC, and that this anomalous structure be permitted to fade away after several months.

The history of the Blue Ribbon Committee, rooted in the history of U2000, raises questions about how the President and senior officers talk to the faculty. They clearly want to do so. FCC needs to think about how to handle that communication consistent with the governance system and with the President's need to consult. The problem, Professor Morrison pointed out, is that Senate committees respond to the pressures of the moment; the Finance and Planning Committee, of which he was a member, deals with finances and with the ORGANIZATION of planning, but never with what is being planned. Planning needs to be split off so it draws on groups that do not look at anything that has to do with this biennium. Also a problem, it was said, is the short terms of committee chairs.

Professor Adams said he would speak with the President to determine how he wished to proceed. He then adjourned the meeting at 4:00.

-- Gary Engstrand