

Minutes*

**Senate Committee on Finance and Planning
January 5, 1993**

Present: Irwin Rubenstein (chair), Carl Adams, Karen Geronime, Virginia Gray, Michael Hoey, Thomas Hoffmann, Julie Idelkope, Karen Karni, Craig Kissock, Fred Morrison, Jeff von Munkwitz-Smith, Roger Paschke, Richard Pfutzenreuter, Paul Sackett, Jason Schmidt, Thomas Scott, Mary Sue Simmons, Susie Torgerson

Guests: (FCC members: John Adams, James Tracy, James VanAlstine), Vice President Eugene Allen, Professor Thomas Burk (Senate Committee on Computing and Information Systems), Senior Vice President Robert Erickson, Patricia Kovel-Jarboe (Academic Affairs), Jeanne Markell (Outreach Council), Cherie Perlmutter (Health Sciences; Outreach Council)

1. Supercomputing

Professor Rubenstein welcomed Professor Karen Karni and the FCC members to the Committee, called for introductions, and then closed the meeting for a discussion of recommendations to Professor Bognanno about supercomputing. After discussing the letter, and agreeing that its recommendations represent the minimum steps that should be taken, the Committee voted in favor of them (with one abstention).

2. First Interim Report of the Outreach Council

Professor Rubenstein then welcomed Vice President Allen to the meeting to discuss the first report of the Outreach Council. Dr. Allen began by noting that the report represents the first phase of the process, which will be an iterative and consultative effort that will likely produce more than one report to the President. This Phase I report is not a policy document but is intended to assist the strategic planning process and will be used in the second round of consultation with various groups.

Highlights of the report, Dr. Allen said, are these:

- It was clear from the beginning that a definition was needed--what is it that this part of the University's mission consists of? Teaching and research are probably more clearly understood, while "public service" and "extension" and similar terms have a number of meanings. As a result, the Council developed a definition, contained in the report. "Public service" has probably become so generic a term that it cannot be recovered for use in the University's mission, and while no label is perfect, the Council decided "outreach" was better than "service."
- The Council has also developed a vision statement on what a university such as this one is about, which includes the generation of knowledge, the sharing of that knowledge with students, and the sharing of research results that address state and societal needs.

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- Also included in the report is an attempt to develop a conceptual understanding of outreach, including the propositions that it is a two-way street (the transfer of research to society, the society informing the University about some of the questions it needs to be asking). In addition, outreach is seen as a logical part of the University's mission; it is also legislatively mandated.
- It is clear, Dr. Allen told the Committee, that the University has a "rich agenda" of outreach programs being performed by the faculty in every unit; it is hard to imagine a single method of delivery.
- The Council has also posed a set of questions, intended to aid the strategic planning process. For example, in conjunction with the faculty workload document, the question of rewards for faculty effort in outreach will need to be examined.

Dr. Allen set out a number of summary points about the document: (1) There is a broad consensus among the deans that outreach is currently important and this will probably increase in terms of its impact on how the University will be viewed. (2) The University has a diverse array of outreach activities. (3) Outreach programs are funded in every way imaginable, from 0100 funds to State Specials to fees to gifts to grants and contracts. (4) The Council has heard from many people that the issue of how faculty outreach activities are to be evaluated and rewarded must be addressed. (5) Whenever the subject of outreach is before the Board of Regents, it engenders considerable interest.

Committee members commended the report and also raised several points.

- The vision statement does not acknowledge that some people make use of the University because they are curious and want to expand their horizons; the report focuses on responding to social needs and utilitarian outcomes--which are worthy, but do not encompass all of what might be called outreach.
- What set of relationships with the outside world are NOT outreach? What would be EXCLUDED? In addition, people in the community have various visions of the University--as an engine of economic growth, as a force for social justice--how does it decide what it will NOT do?

To the last point, Dr. Allen said the Council views outreach as knowledge-based education programs. Some other activities are service. Taking ALG as an example, he said it originally was knowledge-based, but has since evolved to a service function. Many times a research program has needs that only the University itself can meet (a product, a shop). The organ transplant program needed ALG, so developed it; later it was needed by other programs, and used in other ways, and the University moved to providing it as a service. What needs to be asked is if an activity is a service that could be provided by others or if it is a teaching or research activity. Intercollegiate athletics, public relations, and alumni relations are legitimate outreach activities but they do not fall within the focus of the Outreach Council. The report, one Committee member told Dr. Allen, does not make the distinctions that he made in this meeting; the sharper definition is the one that has been presented here.

Citing the example of a collegiate unit that does a lot of outreach in a variety of ways (CEE, inloaded teaching, workshops, consulting), Dr. Allen pointed out that very similar information is

delivered to similar audiences but by different modes. One might say that inloaded teaching is not outreach, but that is splitting hairs. There are times, he said, when one cannot distinguish between teaching, research, and outreach--they are often all included in the same activity.

One cautionary note was sounded by a Committee member: The Council needs to consider the limits to what should be expected from the faculty. The report could be read as saying the University should be doing many things for many people--and why isn't it? The University is often viewed as a cheap or free source of help; as a high-value, under-priced resource, it can expect to be used--and the Council's report proposes an even larger agenda. Is this setting ourselves up for a fall, or falsely raising the expectations of others?

The Council is trying to get at that question, Dr. Allen said, through one of the questions it has posed (setting priorities for outreach)--and it is for that reason that every unit must consider outreach in its strategic planning effort. Each must consider its priorities and balance the use of its resources; units may say outreach or other activities are important in its priorities, while the University may turn out to have higher priorities elsewhere. Unit priorities have to be understood, however, before any institutional priorities can be set, and right now no one is at the point where it can be said something should or should not be done.

The tenure regulations use the term service, it was pointed out; what will be acceptable for tenure may not square with outreach. Dr. Allen said the Council had not considered that question at all but may need to take it into account. His own view is that the key is what is being done in service of the mission (teaching, research, and outreach). Outreach is really the delivery of knowledge--teaching--but perhaps to different audiences and at different sites than traditionally has been the case. In the case of the Extension Service, for instance, he related, the efforts are NOT considered as service but as teaching or delivering educational programs to constituents.

The tenure code contains the provision for service because the administration wanted it, recalled one Committee member, and teaching--but for the specific exception for the Extension Service—is confined to degree programs. Service is intended to be discipline-related service. One concern in all of this, however, is the tendency to compartmentalize activities TOO much--if it is research, it must not be teaching, and if it's service, it cannot be research. Many activities have elements of all three.

The document, it was then pointed out, could be read as a directive that units should be moving to provide more outreach/service, away from or in addition to what has been called teaching and research. It would be unfortunate if the document were used that way, or written in such a way that someone in three years could use it to say "the University must do X." The Council must be cautious in drafting the next report.

In his view, Dr. Allen said, faculty either teach or do research. Outreach is teaching in a different mode. They should not be broken apart, he agreed.

The document also, it was argued, is not phrased the way Dr. Allen interprets it; the wording implies that a unit WILL have priorities in outreach and that it OUGHT to be engaged in outreach, even if confronted with a budget cut that may have an impact on other activities. This notion is part of the "institutional murkiness" that attaches to many activities and varying practices in units: From a faculty perspective, what must one do to obtain tenure? The Council needs to examine a web of problems and of

faculty responsibilities and the balance in institutional priorities. Dr. Allen responded by saying that questions must be asked at the unit level about priorities for faculty time. At present it is distributed across teaching, research, and outreach in some way; perhaps it should not remain the same.

One Committee member said he accepted the proposition that outreach might be considered teaching in a different form, but if so, then the University mission statement should not have teaching, research, and outreach as three more-or-less equal elements. Nor should they be considered mutually exclusive. And that simple, straightforward definition of outreach is not evident from the language of the report.

Another way to consider the issue is to ask what problems the Outreach Council is being asked to help solve. One problem may be that there are a lot of activities that are not seen as valued because they are called something other than teaching or research. Another might be that the University does not have as good a connection with its constituents as it should have. Yet another might be the internal allocation of effort to the mission--some might see certain activities as not contributing (this could also be the result of confusion in terminology). What set of problems needs to be fixed? Although not explicitly, this Committee member surmised, the University really IS saying it wants to do more that is helpful to its constituents other than through traditional teaching and research activities.

Another problem seen by many of the deans, Dr. Allen added, is the reward structure for faculty and activities that units value. If outreach is seen as an aspect of teaching, observed another Committee member, that should help incorporate it in the reward structure--and should also respond, at least in part, to the questions of the limits of what the University should do and what will and will not be considered as outreach.

Another Committee member asserted, however, that anything departments do not value, they do not reward; if the activity is not rewarded, it is not valued. The deans, Dr. Allen rejoined, would not agree. One Committee member observed that the problem is not entirely internal to the University: the reward structure for the faculty is a market, in which the University is one player, and that market doesn't value outreach as much as it does traditional teaching and research.

The state, said another Committee member, is still asking the University--as it did in the 1950s--to supply things cheaply. The University cannot do so, but tries anyway, as a good citizen--demonstrating that one cannot squeeze blood out of a turnip. We generate knowledge, it was agreed--but who will pay for it?

It was agreed that outreach activities are not limited to the State of Minnesota, and Dr. Allen concurred that language on the point needed to be reconsidered.

In leaving "public service" out of the University's mission, is not a big component of its activities being ignored? A lot of faculty, through leadership positions in the community, play an important public service role in the state--roles that are not teaching; is that not important? Unless in the role of translating research, Ms. Markell said, it is outside the definition of outreach; Dr. Allen said it depended on the role of the person: if in their capacity as a faculty member, then it is outreach; if as a citizen, then not.

Professor Scott noted a recent discussion of the role of the University of California and the two views of it as seen by its president, Jack Peltason: more involvement in the life of the state versus

maintenance of a neutral status. Peltason's objective will be an effort to employ faculty brain power in direct service to the people of California.

Professor Rubenstein thanked Dr. Allen for coming to the meeting; he, in turn, invited any additional comments Committee members might have and said he would return later as additional reports are issued.

3. Planning for Planning

Professor Scott next distributed copies of a "Planning for Planning" document prepared by Academic Affairs; it was supposed to have been mailed and received in advance of the meeting. The document is an effort to draw together discussions that were held Fall Quarter with many groups and individuals about establishing parameters for the planning process as well as to suggest proposals or responses to a number of questions. The purpose is to have a draft statement, developed by Senior Vice President Infante, that can receive wide distribution and rapid response; there would then be a revised document with even wider distribution. He reviewed briefly the contents of the document; it was agreed that the Committee would devote a meeting in two weeks to discussion of it.

There was also brief discussion of the process for discussing the document--will the Faculty Consultative Committee take it up separately?--and the need to distinguish between process questions about planning and the value judgments to be made. It would not be a fruitful use of FCC time, it was suggested, for it to dwell on process questions; as the ultimate source to reflect faculty value judgments, it should deal with the value questions. This Committee, however, is the primary planning group, and should also attend to the value judgments being made.

4. CUFS User Steering Committee

Professor Rubenstein next asked Mr. Pfutzenreuter to discuss the CUFS user steering committee being appointed. Mr. Pfutzenreuter distributed a one-page description of the steering committee. He explained that from the time he took his job, he has received hundreds of suggestions for improvements in CUFS, ranging from forms improvement to new reports. It became apparent that priorities needed to be established, so a user committee has been established to set those priorities. The committee is just being formed, and will consist of financial and administrative staff nominated by the Business Officer Group.

The typical mistake is being made, averred one Committee member: Business officers will pick people who will give advice about what business officers see as useful--so he will never learn what managers (i.e., department heads and deans) need, many of whom are giving up on the system. Mr. Pfutzenreuter said he assumed--perhaps mistakenly--that business officers bring requests because their dean or department head wants something. To a large extent, he was told, managers do not know what can be done on CUFS or, if it can, that it won't be. They must be involved. Business officers are key people, but they do not communicate to deans and department heads what they can expect out of the system.

In part, it was agreed, there is an education and training problem, but it is also the case that when deans or department heads ask for information, they are told it can't be done. Right now units have NO IDEA what their balances are. Operators of the system don't care about that; managers MUST know. Business officers do not know the right questions to ask so that managers receive what they need.

Senior Vice President Erickson told the Committee that there is another group, a steering group, being appointed to serve the purpose being argued for. There will also be a discussion with the Audit Committee in February about plans and a road map for the system; in both ways, the involvement of managers will be addressed.

Other Committee members concurred that managers must have a role in the remediation of CUFS. One Committee member recalled discussions with former policy makers in government; what they found frustrating, it was related, is that policy can be adopted but it is frustrated at the business officer level. That is happening here: the University bought a new system but it is being asked to replicate the old system. The user steering committee, Mr. Erickson explained, will deal with the nuts and bolts of the system, but the issue of manager involvement is critical, he agreed--it is at the heart of how the institution will be managed.

Everyone wants better reports, Mr. Pfitzenreuter observed, and that should be the first priority. The information is in the system; the problem is getting it to the units in usable form.

A timetable of improvements should be provided, it was suggested.

The Committee adjourned at 5:10.

-- Gary Engstrand

University of Minnesota