Classroom Advisory Subcommittee (CAS)
October 17, 2016
Minutes of the Meeting

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

[**In these minutes:** Committee on Committees Review; Chair's Report on Learning Space Plan; Other Business]

PRESENT: Maria Sera (chair), Donalee Attardo, Mark Bergen, David Crane, Elise Eckert, Mike Hofer, Kent Kirkby, Jeff Lindgren, Thomas Michaels, Peng Peng, Christine Peper, Mary Steffes

REGRETS: Roberta Kehne, Suvadip Sinha

ABSENT: Ryan Bean, Susan Spanovich

GUESTS: Steve Pearthree, Rick Wagner, members, Committee on Committees

OTHERS: Vickie Courtney, director, University Senate Office

1. **Committee on Committees Review**
Chair Maria Sera called the meeting to order and welcomed Committee on Committees members Steve Pearthree and Rick Wagner, who were present in order to conduct the review. Wagner started off by asking about the subcommittee's relationship with its parent committee, the Senate Committee on Educational Policy (SCEP). Members commented that CAS has mainly functioned independently and wondered whether it should be a separate committee rather than a subcommittee. Sera pointed out that the charges do overlap. Wagner asked whether CAS's charge has expanded over the years, and members agreed that it had, as the committee has looked at non-classroom space such as outdoor space and study space in recent years. Wagner then asked whether the work of the subcommittee could or should be handled by the parent committee, and members thought not. Jeff Lindgren said that investment in learning space should be handled intentionally and planfully, and that CAS is essential to that end. Crane added that CAS also serves to represent classroom and space issues, as larger units such as Information Technology and Facilities Management may lose sight of space issues in light of other challenges.

Pearthree then asked whether members felt that the subcommittee's membership was appropriate. Kent Kirkby commented that more student representation would be beneficial.

With no further discussion, Pearthree and Wagner thanked the committee and departed.

2. **Chair's Report on Learning Space Plan**
Next, Sera updated members on a meeting she had with Professor Sue Wick, chair, SCEP regarding the Learning Space Plan. She relayed three ideas that Wick had about how to proceed:

- Build alliances with other committees, such as SCEP, the Student Senate Consultative Committee (SSCC) and Disabilities Issues
- Offer more concrete evidence on the need for a plan
- Find out why the provost decided not to pursue the plan when it was proposed previously

Sera said that she planned to attend an SSCC meeting in order to request their support on the initiative, and she asked Lindgren and Crane to provide statistics and research on learning space use and best practices. Wick planned to ask the provost's staff why the plan was not picked up. Sera also commented that in February, the subcommittee will hear from representatives from Capital Planning.

Thomas Michaels asked what members see as "the next thing" in classroom space, citing the Bruininks Hall Active Learning Classrooms (ACLs) as something that is seen as a model. Crane said that ACLs have been a learning process for the Office of Classroom Management (OCM), and that it is difficult to keep up with the technology changes. He said Bruininks Hall put the University on the map in terms of the number of ACLs in one building, which was unique in higher education at the time. Kirkby said that one detriment to ACLs is that they are not very conducive to the lecture format, which will always be present and necessary. All of the tech gets in the way of lecture, he said, and wondered how spaces could be made flexible to accommodate many types of instruction. Crane said that it was also important to consider necessary function versus the cost in ACLs. For example, if round tables are all that is needed for a certain class or format, there should be classrooms that fulfill that need without going overboard. OCM monitors tech use in ACLs, he said, in order to track what technology is most utilized and for what content He also added that when departments request space in Bruininks Hall by the deadline, OCM is able to accommodate 100% of those requests. However, they can only meet about 25% of the demand after the deadline. With regard to student feedback on classroom space, Crane asked whether the Student Rating of Teaching (SRT) survey asks about classroom space, and Sera said that there is one question asking about the quality of the space. Crane wondered if data on that question was available, and Mike Hofer asked whether more specific questions could be asked. No one was sure whether it is possible to modify the questions asked on the SRT. Sera asked Crane if OCM surveys students about their classrooms. Crane said that they survey faculty. He offered to put together data on demand for and utilization of ACLs.

Elise Eckert, a student member, said that at her previous institution, smart boards were utilized and students were able to pull up the content on their laptops or tablets. Kirkby agreed that this is what students are used to, and that smart boards are useful for holding discussions, as opposed to listening to lectures. This facilitates peer-to-peer learning. However, he said, some students are critical of this flipped classroom approach, saying that they came to the University to learn from their professors, not other students.

Mark Bergen said that in the Carlson school, there are sponsored rooms that a group can "check out" for working on group projects. The group checking out the room has exclusive use of that room during the period for which they check it out, so all of their notes and materials can stay in the room for the duration of the project. He wondered if a similar model could be used centrally for classrooms, so that space can be used on a project basis and opened up when the project is finished.

3. Other Business

Crane informed members of a transition underway in which Department Coordinators would manage the use of space in buildings in which that department has space, and that each building will have a team of people who meet to decide on space use in that building. He said that OCM should be represented in these meetings, but was not sure how that would work logistically, since OCM has a very small staff.

With no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned.

Amber Bathke
University Senate Office