

Senate Committee on Educational Policy (SCEP)
March 8, 2017
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: Equity, Access and Diversity Counseling Privacy Resolution; Learning Management System Discussion; MSA Fall Break Resolution; Financial Aid]

PRESENT: Sue Wick (chair), Michael Anderson, John Carlis, Elaine Darst, Michelle Dobbratz, Stacy Doepner-Hove, Gayle Golden, Jennifer Goodnough, Vedant Goyal, Kenneth Leopold, Bob McMaster, Lauren Mitchell, Rachna Shah

ABSENT: Nicola Alexander

REGRETS: Rani Bezanson, Scott Lanyon, Keith Mayes, Nevin Young

GUESTS: Makda Biniam, director, Academic Affairs Committee, Minnesota Student Association; Lee-Ann Breuch, associate professor, College of Liberal Arts; Ann Hill Duin, professor, College of Liberal Arts; Jeremy Jenkins, chair, Equity, Access and Diversity Committee; Jill Trites, senior teaching specialist, College of Education and Human Development

OTHERS: Julie Christiansen, deputy chief of staff, Office of the President; Ety DeVeaux, chief of staff and assistant to the vice provost and dean, Graduate School; Rilyn Eischens, student reporter, Minnesota Daily; Lyle Peterson, policy coordinator, Office of the President; Jennifer Reckner, chief of staff, Office of Undergraduate Education; Leslie Schiff, associate dean, Curriculum, Office of Undergraduate Education; Stacey Tidball, director, Compliance, Academic Support Resources; Marlo Welshons, assistant to the provost, Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost

1. Equity, Access and Diversity Counseling Privacy Resolution

Chair Sue Wick introduced Jeremy Jenkins, chair, Equity, Access, and Diversity Committee (EAD). Jenkins referred members to the resolution that EAD had passed regarding the privacy of students' counseling and medical records. He explained the resolution was prompted by an incident at the University of Oregon, in which a student sued the university for violation of her Title IX rights. In this case, the student had also received counseling services from the university, and those records were used in the preparation of the university's defense. Jenkins added that counseling records are covered by FERPA, not HIPAA, and are therefore owned by the university. Last year, the committee approached the Office of the General Counsel (OGC), asking for a written policy saying that the University of Minnesota would not use counseling records in such a manner. Jenkins reported that OGC said that they would not use counseling records in this way, but declined to put it in a written policy. Therefore, the resolution asks the University, as OGC's client, to make a statement promising not to use counseling records in this

way. The concern, clarified Jenkins, is not that a situation similar to the incident at the University of Oregon is likely to occur, but rather that knowing their counseling records could theoretically be used in this way could dissuade students from seeking counseling when they need it.

Gayle Golden asked whether this would apply to academic skills counseling as well as mental health counseling, as Student Counseling Services (SCS) does both. Jenkins said that the focus is on mental health counseling, but that EAD hadn't tried to parse the different types of counseling. Other members raised the concern that this could be interpreted as referring to academic advising and other types of advising as well, including records in APLUS. Golden pointed out that academic advising encounters can also include discussions of mental health, so the distinction is not clear cut. Jenkins said that this issue had not come up in EAD's previous discussions, and acknowledged that these were good points. Members indicated that they supported the spirit of the resolution but had concerns about the specific wording. Jenkins thanked the committee for their suggestions and feedback.

2. Learning Management System Discussion

Lee-Ann Breuch, Donalee Attardo, Jill Trites and Ann Hill Duin arrived to discuss the Canvas pilot and possible learning management system transition. Breuch explained that she is a member of the University Learning Technology Advisors (ULTA), which is a committee composed primarily of faculty members, as well as representatives from the provost's office, academic leadership, and the Office of Information Technology. ULTA is charged with evaluating and making recommendations on academic technology life-cycle decisions (adopting, expanding use, decommissioning, etc.). The committee is currently evaluating whether to renew the University's Unizin membership, and also whether to transition from the Moodle learning management system to Canvas, which is part of Unizin. Attardo clarified that Unizin is a university-owned and directed consortium. The consortium's current members are the University of Michigan, Colorado State University, the University of Florida system, Indiana University, Oregon State University, the University of Iowa, The Ohio State University, Penn State, the University of Wisconsin - Madison, the University of Minnesota, and the University of Nebraska Lincoln.

Attardo said that a pilot of Canvas has been underway at the University since 2015, with about 40-50 instructors using the platform. The Center for Educational Innovation has conducted an evaluation of Canvas each semester of the pilot. Data from these evaluations show that of the instructors and students using Canvas, 59% of instructors and 50% of students prefer Canvas over Moodle. When asked if the University should switch from Moodle to Canvas, 60% of students using Canvas and 79% of the instructors in the pilot said yes.

Attardo went on to explain that there are concerns about the sustainability of the Moodle platform. She made the following points:

- The University is an "outlier" among higher-ed Moodle users in terms of size and complexity. Moodle tends to favor small, private colleges in its development, and does not serve the needs of large, complex universities as well.
- Among its peer institutions, the University is one of few using Moodle. No other Big Ten

Academic Alliance (BTAA) institutions use Moodle (64% use Canvas), and only seven of 115 Carnegie R1 institutions use Moodle (37% use Canvas).

- There are technical challenges due to Moodle design issues and resulting expenses. The University is one of the biggest Moodle implementations in the world, and is approaching the limit of what Moodle can accommodate in terms of infrastructure. The University would need to invest significant funds in a redesign of the current system soon to be ready for future growth.
- Planned outages for upgrades and maintenance must occur in a self-hosted learning management system (as opposed to one hosted in the cloud, such as Canvas). A self-hosted learning management system is also more vulnerable to unplanned outages.

Golden asked what kinds of needs a large University presents that Moodle does not meet. Attardo said that for example, Moodle's grade book takes too long to upload grades for large lecture classes. She said some instructors report initiating the upload and then going for coffee because it takes so long. Golden asked what kind of learning curve there is with Canvas. Breuch responded that it depends on the complexity of the course. She said that there is a transition tool that migrates course content, but that design elements can take more time. She added that ULTA faculty members have found features in either platform that will get the job done, and there is no clear consensus about which system is best.

Hill Duin said that she appreciated Canvas's analytics features, and the ability to engage students in active learning online. She also liked the peer review and rubrics functions for writing courses, and that students can see how they measure up to the class average. She did not like the way conversations thread in Canvas.

Trites said that she liked the architecture of Canvas, including the student calendar and a feature called Speed Grader that greatly reduced the time it took her to grade assignments for large classes. Speed Grader allows talk-to-text, video comments, and includes comment and markup tools.

Attardo informed members about the upcoming fora on this matter, and encouraged members to share the information with colleagues who may be interested in giving feedback.

3. Minnesota Student Association Fall Break Resolution

Wick yielded the floor to Makda Biniam, director, Academic Affairs Committee, Minnesota Student Association (MSA), who was visiting the committee to discuss MSA's resolution requesting that the Twin Cities Campus institute a one-day fall break in October, in years where the number of possible days of instruction between Labor Day and the Christmas holiday allows. Biniam said that MSA had proposed a Monday, since many students already do not have classes on Fridays. The committee made the following comments:

- Subtracting more time could be difficult, as lab and discussion courses are very short on time in fall already, as they lose one Monday for Labor Day and a Thursday and Friday for Thanksgiving, and A term and B term courses are already only seven weeks.

- Since Monday courses are already short one Monday for Labor Day, members suggested choosing a Wednesday or Thursday. Golden suggested extending Thanksgiving break to include Wednesday.
- Jennifer Goodnough said that since there is no State Fair to plan around, Morris starts earlier and has a fall break. However, she said, it is still challenging for lab courses. She offered to talk with Biniam about the solutions they have found at Morris.

Hearing no further discussion, Biniam thanked the committee and left.

4. Financial Aid

Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Education Bob McMaster gave a presentation about financial aid. He started by discussing the Student Experience in the Research University (SERU) survey, which will be administered this year. It has not been done the last two years, as it is on a three-year cycle. The SERU allows University officials to compare the undergraduate experience at the University of Minnesota with that of peer institutions, such as the University of Florida, the University of California system, Penn State, Texas, and North Carolina, down to the department level. He added that the SERU has moved to the University of Minnesota operationally. The SERU in the past has revealed that 74% of students report being satisfied with the value of their undergraduate education for the cost of tuition.

McMaster informed the committee that the current estimated cost of attendance for in-state undergraduates for 2016-17 was \$26,482, with \$14,224 of that being for tuition and fees, \$9,058 for room and board, and \$3,200 estimated for books, supplies, transportation, etc. McMaster said that the room and board costs at the University are among the lowest in the Big 10. For non-resident undergraduates, the estimated cost of attendance for 2016-17 was \$37,646 (\$23,888 tuition and fees, \$9,058 room and board, and \$4,700 estimated for books, supplies, transportation, etc.). McMaster said the University has the second-lowest cost of attendance for non-resident students in the Big 10. In part, this is because about ten years ago, the University intentionally lowered the out-of-state tuition to \$4,000 more than in-state tuition, in an effort to attract more out of state students. Currently, non-resident, non-reciprocity students make up about 14% of the undergraduate student body.

McMaster then explained the University's philosophy around need-based financial aid, which is that every student enrolling in the University should be funded up to the cost of attendance, between their Expected Family Contribution (EFC) as identified through the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), and need-based aid, including loans. The state of Minnesota, said McMaster, has a very generous state grant program, and the University also has an internal need-based scholarship, the U Promise Scholarship, that was expanded last year to allow students whose families have an adjusted gross income up to \$120,000 to qualify. He presented the following chart to demonstrate typical aid packages for in-state students with different income levels:

Typical Need-Based Aid Packages at Various Income Levels: UMTC, MN Resident Undergraduate, 2016-17

Cost of Attendance (COA)	\$26,482	\$26,482	\$26,482
Tuition and Fees	\$14,224	\$14,224	\$14,224
Adjusted Gross Income (AGI)	\$25,000	\$50,000	\$99,999
Expected Family Contribution (EFC)	\$0	\$4,750	\$14,778
<u>Typical Aid Package</u>			
Pell	\$5,815	\$1,065	\$0
State Grant	\$5,937	\$6,223	\$0
SEOG <small>(Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant)</small>	\$600	\$600	\$0
U Promise	<u>\$4,134</u>	<u>\$2,598</u>	<u>\$1,056</u>
Subtotal Gift Aid	\$16,486	\$10,486	\$1,056
Student Loan (amount offered)	\$5,500	\$5,500	\$5,500
Parent Loan (amount offered)	<u>\$4,496</u>	<u>\$10,496</u>	<u>\$19,926</u>
Total Aid Package (offered)	\$26,482	\$26,482	\$26,482

Office of Undergraduate Education



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McMaster acknowledged that the loans assume credit-worthiness, and that not all families and students will qualify for loans, and that some families, even if they do qualify, decline to accept loans for various reasons. Student loan amounts are capped, which is why they do not change depending on the income level. Parent loans increase quite a bit depending on income level, but McMaster also acknowledged that even a \$4,496 loan for a family with an adjusted gross income of \$25,000 is quite significant. He added that many students will also have work-study, other outside scholarships, and/or savings, which are not reflected on this chart.

Reciprocity and non-resident, non-reciprocity students are not eligible for the state grant or the U Promise scholarship, he added. For this reason, the University does not heavily recruit low-income students from out of state.

With regard to loan debt, McMaster reported that about 43% of undergraduates graduate with no debt, and that percentage has been increasing in recent years. The average debt for those who borrow is \$26,000, and that number has been going down. However, said McMaster, the percentage of debt incurred by students borrowing more than the class average (\$26,086) for the fall 2015 graduating class constituted 67% of the total class debt. Put another way, 1/3 of the students did 2/3 of the borrowing.

Golden asked why the percentage of students with no debt has been increasing. McMaster speculated that it likely has to do with both the recession ending and the push to graduate in four years. Golden said that increased financial literacy may also be a factor, and McMaster agreed.

In the interest of time, McMaster concluded his presentation and Wick adjourned the meeting.

Amber Bathke
University Senate Office