

Faculty Consultative Committee (FCC)
May 18, 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 reflect the views of, nor are they binding on, the senate, the administration, or the Board of Regents.

[In these minutes: Update on Joint Task Force for Student Mental Health; Legislative Liaison Update; Conversation with Senior Vice President for Finance & Operations Brian Burnett; Other Business; Conversation with President Eric Kaler]

PRESENT: Colin Campbell (chair), Catherine French, Kathleen Krichbaum, Michael Kyba, Monica Luciana, Michael Oakes, Donna Spannaus-Martin, Susan Wick, Greta Friedemann-Sanchez, Peggy Nelson, Amy Pittenger, Peter Tiffin

REGRETS: Joseph Konstan, Dan Feeney, George Trachte, Robert Blair, Shawn Curley, Janet Ericksen, Ruth Okediji

GUESTS: Professor Phil Buhlmann, member, Joint Task Force on Student Mental Health; Senior Vice President for Finance & Operations Brian Burnett; President Eric Kaler

OTHERS ATTENDING: Jon Steadland, interim chief of staff, Office of the President

1. Update on the Joint Task Force for Student Mental Health (JTFSMH): Professor Campbell convened the meeting and welcomed those present. He then turned to Professor Wick, co-chair, JTFSMH, to provide the committee with a progress update on the work of the Task Force. Professor Wick began by providing background information about the Task Force, and noted that at the request of the Faculty Consultative Committee (FCC) and the Provost, the JTFSMH was established in summer/fall 2016. The Task Force was charged with providing the FCC and Provost with its observations concerning the role faculty and instructional staff play in student mental health, and to come up with ideas for engaging faculty and instructional staff in recognizing their role so they can contribute to positive student mental health environments. Additionally, the Task Force was asked to make recommendations about the Provost's Committee on Student Mental Health in terms of its charge, operation, and membership.

The Task Force recently completed its report, said Professor Wick, and it has since been shared with Provost Hanson who had a few cosmetic changes. Moving forward, the goal will be to make sure that the report does not get filed away and not looked at again. In terms of next steps, the focus will be on implementation with the first step being to meet with the Council of Deans in early June. As mentioned earlier, the whole point of this initiative is for faculty to recognize their role in student mental health and to help prevent and recognize it in students. In order to do this, however, faculty will need the support of their dean and department/unit head. The plan is to create "ambassadors" who would work with departmental mental health advocates and bring this information to the attention of faculty via department meetings. Then, in order to know if any progress is being made, benchmarks will need to be created.

With that said, Professor Wick asked members if they noticed anything missing in the report in terms of recommendations, and also for input on how to get the word out about this initiative. Members' comments and questions included:

- Please elaborate on the graduate student's comment at the May 4 University Senate meeting who spoke out against the report. Since that meeting, noted Professor Wick, she has spoken with that student and it is her understanding that the student felt the report was too detailed and contained too many recommendations, which the student felt would be a turn off for faculty. Professor Wick added that from her perspective she thought it would be helpful to provide faculty with as many recommendations as possible. Professor Pittenger said that during the implementation phase it is likely a lot of this information would get refined, and she agreed with Professor Wick that it is better to start with more rather than less recommendations. Professor Buhlmann, a member of the JTFSMH, commented that it is his impression that most faculty and students do not recognize how differently the various colleges and departments operate, so for that reason not all the recommendations will be a fit for all the colleges and departments; this is not a one size fits all set of recommendations. Along these same lines, said Professor Luciana, she believes less experienced faculty in particular would find it helpful to have more suggestions rather than fewer.
- Professor Campbell asked if the Task Force has gotten pushback from faculty who take the position that their class is difficult and that is just the way it is. Professor Buhlmann said he would tell these faculty that there are two kinds of stressors, avoidable and unavoidable ones. In his opinion, he believes faculty have a responsibility to eliminate unnecessary stressors because these distract from a student's success. Professor Nelson agreed and said the report does not tell faculty to make their classes easier, but rather to set clear expectations, etc.
- Who is the intended audience for this multi-page report, asked Professor Tiffin? Who will likely read the whole report? Professor Wick said the intended audience is faculty, teaching assistants, P&A instructors, adjunct/contract faculty, and they only need to read the first half because the second half of the report deals with the Provost's Committee on Student Mental Health. Professor Tiffin suggested drafting a one-page bullet abstract and have that be in the front of the document because when people get a lengthy document there is often a tendency to not read it at all.
- Professor Nelson suggested sharing this document at New Faculty Orientation and with the Center for Educational Innovation.
- How many departments/units across the University have student mental health advocates in them, asked Professor Campbell? Professor Buhlmann said there are about 40 mental health advocates across campus, and this is low, but it is also a pilot program. The goal is to grow this number. Professor Campbell said at minimum every graduate program should have a mental health advocate. He added that he and Professor Konstan would be suggesting this to Provost Hanson.
- Professor Friedemann-Sanchez rhetorically asked about the best way Provost Hanson can communicate this report and recommendations to units so that the units communicate it to their faculty and instructional staff. Professor Oakes suggested targeting directors of graduate studies (DGSs). Professor Buhlmann added that a number of people who served on the JTFSMH have a vested interest in communicating this report and are not willing to let it go. Professor Wick also mentioned charging the

Provost's Committee on Student Mental Health with this task and to expand the membership of that committee to include faculty. She further noted that Vice Provost for Faculty and Academic Affairs Ropers-Huilman is also interested in folding this report into faculty training.

- Was there any discussion about informing students about this report, asked Professor Krichbaum? This is a good point, said Professor Wick, and agreed it should be communicated to students. She suggested bringing it to the Student Senate as one way of making students aware of it.
- In response to an observation by Professor Campbell, Professor Wick said that Provost Hanson is very aware that things that come top/down tend to not be well received. Therefore, Professor Wick said it is her impression that Provost Hanson would like to see this effort bubble up from the bottom and be more of a grassroots initiative.

2. Legislative liaison update: At the request of Professor Campbell in the few minutes before Senior Vice President for Finance & Operations Brian Burnett arrived, Professors Oakes and Spannaus-Martin provided a brief legislature update. Professor Oakes said that while the legislative session is scheduled to conclude by midnight on Monday, May 22, it is still not clear what is going to happen as it relates to the University's budget request. With that said, being new to this position, he and Professor Spannaus-Martin both noted that it has been a very educational year for them. They also both agreed that the University needs to do a better job explaining its three-pronged mission to not only legislators and Minnesota citizens, which is 1) teaching and learning, 2) research and discovery, and 3) outreach and public service. Professor Oakes concluded the update by saying that the University has some strategic challenges that it needs to overcome.

3. Conversation with Senior Vice President for Finance and Operations Brian Burnett: Professor Campbell welcomed Senior Vice President (SVP) for Finance and Operations Brian Burnett and called for a round of introductions. Following introductions, SVP Burnett began by providing the committee with information about his background and noted that he first got to know the University as a parent because his daughter attends the University and just finished her junior year.

Next, he talked about the fact that the University of Minnesota is a world-class research university, and said more needs to be done to make sure citizens of the state and legislators know this. He mentioned that he has talked with legislators about the fact that there is no other research university in the State of Minnesota. In his view, a world-class university deserves world-class support services but this does not necessarily mean the most expensive. For example, for every dollar the University spends on support, is a dollar that it cannot spend on its mission. Therefore, the goal is to identify the most efficient, high quality services.

Naturally, the Board of Regents wants a sustainable fiscal future for the University, said SVP Burnett. Unfortunately, however, the University does not receive as much money from the state as it used to. Currently, the University is bringing in \$914 million in tuition, and receives roughly \$650 million in state support. In his opinion, this gap will only widen with time. With that said, the University is going to have to figure out how to act more private-like without

giving up its public mission. One way will be to focus on enrollment in order to generate tuition. Additionally, the University will need to focus on growing its endowment.

SVP Burnett noted that the University not only needs to educate its external constituents about what it does, but its internal constituents (faculty and staff) as well. Most collegiate unit employees, for example, probably do not even realize that more of their paycheck comes from tuition dollars than from state support, and this story needs to be told. Today, the University is operating with 15% fewer dollars per student than it did in 1998 after adjusting for inflation. In 1998, the University had \$16,000 for every student (tuition and state support) and today that number has dropped to \$14,000.

Another thing the University needs to do is look at areas where it is not “best in class,” said SVP Burnett. He cited the example of the University’s Faculty Retirement Plan, which has five recordkeepers compared to other universities that typically have one. The University is exploring going out to bid on this contract to save money on fees, which will also save employees and the institution money. Going forward, some long held assumptions are going to be challenged in order to re-examine what the University does to make sure there is still value in today’s fiscal climate. SVP Burnett said he is going to work hard to get the University’s state appropriation increased from \$20 - \$30 million to \$70 - \$80 million. He noted that there are a number of states that are cutting their funding support to higher education in the upcoming budget year, e.g., Iowa, Missouri, Colorado, Florida. Having said that, he noted that he is honored to be working at the University of Minnesota. He then solicited members’ comments and questions, which included:

- Beyond tuition and state support, another revenue stream for the institution are federal research dollars, said Professor Oakes. He asked SVP Burnett for his thoughts on cuts to federal research dollar overhead. SVP Burnett said this troubles him greatly and noted that it equates to about \$135 million of the University’s budget. There is an assumption in Washington D.C., which is erroneous and that is that the state’s build the research infrastructure for state run universities. Under this erroneous assumption, state universities are given a lower reimbursement rate. While there is some state investment in the University of Minnesota’s research enterprise (Biomedical Discovery District), this is a troubling issue. He also pointed out that this \$135 million from the University’s budget is unrestricted money. Under the current RCM budget model, this means that the cuts will be differential by college and this will be a challenge.

Related to finances, SVP Burnett announced plans for his office to launch a Finance Academy for Academic Leaders in August 2017. The University needs to do a better job of explaining to the University community that not all money is created equal and that not all money has equal utility.

- What is the cost differential of research and how much does the NIH reimburse the University, asked Professor Kyba? SVP Burnett said he does not know the exact figure but it is in the millions. The University subsidizes research on this campus using tuition and state support dollars. With respect to the Academic Health Center, SVP Burnett noted that one of every six dollars of all money coming in to the University is

associated with the Medical School in some way, shape or form. It is interesting to think about the scale of the Medical School and what it means for the University. He also mentioned that the Medical School gets roughly 1/6 of the state O&M appropriation.

- Academic advisors for undergraduate students are a critical component of student success, yet they are categorized as administrators rather than mission support, said Professor Wick, and she finds this disturbing. SVP Burnett said while the University is an amazing educational institution, it needs to do a better job of educating legislators and other external and internal constituents about the University's value.
- Professor Nelson agreed that educating faculty and being transparent about the University's finances should be a high priority for the institution. When the Finance Academy for Academic Leaders is rolled out, said SVP Burnett, this should help with this transparency. Professor Krichbaum commended SVP on the Finance Academy for Academic Leaders program and suggested broadening the target audience for this program. SVP Burnett agreed and said because faculty frequently move into department chair/head positions and other senior administrative positions within the institution, this program will help them to be able to operate and plan a multi-million dollar public asset. He said he would be happy to take this program to all those that are interested. To accomplish this, it will be necessary to build an interesting curriculum that attendees start talking about in order to pique the interest of others so they want to attend too.
- Professor Krichbaum asked about the University's assumptions related to online education. Are online courses thought to be less expensive than traditional classroom courses, and/or more efficient? SVP Burnett said many people believe online instruction is less expensive, but he does not necessarily agree. The University will need to think about where online instruction makes sense and where it does not make sense. He added that in his opinion he sees online instruction as more of a convenience than as a cost saving measure.
- In response to a question from Professor Friedemann-Sanchez about the importance of the football team to the University and its financial impact on the institution, SVP Burnett said football earns the University about \$24 million in net revenue, which essentially pays for most of the University's women's sports that do not cover their own costs. There are three revenue-generating sports out of the 25 sports the University sponsors and these are 1) football, 2) men's basketball, and 3) men's ice hockey; the 22 other sports do not cover their costs. Besides ticket sales and donations as sources of income for the revenue generating sports, there are also television rights. Historically, said SVP Burnett, the University gives the Intercollegiate Athletics Department roughly \$7 million in O&M money, and they pay back through the cost pools \$6.3 million so that is basically a wash; however, they also bring in \$10.4 million of scholarship funding, which goes into the University's tuition budget and flows into O&M. He said the University's Intercollegiate Athletics Department is not costing the institution a lot of money. While the institution has to be thoughtful about how that department spends money, the University needs to be able to afford and offer opportunities under Title IX for female athletes that mirror the undergraduate student body. Football is a uniquely

American phenomenon, and it is how a lot of the University's alums identify with the institution. SVP Burnett volunteered to come back to a future FCC meeting and give the same presentation he gave to the Board of Regents on the funds flow for Athletics.

- Getting back to online learning, commented Professor Luciana, the Department of Psychology sees it is astronomically more expensive than traditional classes. People seem to think that online courses run themselves, but in reality to maintain the courses and update the materials, etc., it is actually incredibly expensive. Additionally, the University has no workload model to account for faculty time when it comes to online instruction. SVP Burnett said while he believes there is a place for online instruction at the University, it is definitely not a one-size-fits-all issue.
- Professor Wick brought up the intersection of education and facilities. The evidence shows that active learning classes positively impact student retention, progress to graduation, and success in classes to name a few. Having said that, she requested that as new buildings are being built and existing buildings are being remodeled that the Classroom Advisory Subcommittee, the Center for Educational Innovation, and others who do research on effective classrooms be consulted about the facilities.
- Why does the University have its own fleet of garbage trucks, asked Professor Campbell? SVP Burnett said tongue in cheek because the University has always done it that way. Professor Campbell said he has heard repeatedly from many people that the University cannot keep on doing things the same way, yet the institution keeps doing things the same way. In SVP Burnett's opinion, hard conversations are going to have to take place concerning what the University should and should not do.

In light of time, Professor Campbell thanked SVP Burnett for a good conversation. SVP Burnett noted that besides launching the Finance Academic for Academic Leaders, he wanted to let members know that there are also plans to do 4-minute videos targeted at external constituents. These videos, on topics such as the University's budget process, its land grant mission, etc., will be put on the University's website.

4. Other business: Professor Krichbaum announced that this will be her last FCC meeting given a new AHC FCC chair has been elected and that is Professor Wendy St. Peter from the College of Pharmacy. She noted that serving on the FCC has been a wonderful experience and she has learned a lot during this time. Professors Luciana and Wick, the current chairs of Faculty Affairs and Educational Policy, respectively, said they too would not be serving on FCC next year because they will no longer be chairing those Senate committees.

5. Conversation with President Kaler: Professor Campbell welcomed President Kaler to the meeting. President Kaler began by saying a few words about what is happening at the legislature in terms of the University's budget and bonding requests, and concluded by noting that the University will simply have to wait and see what happens once the session ends. However, while he is somewhat disappointed with where things are at now, he is not discouraged and continues to hope for the best.

Professor Oakes asked whether the University of Minnesota is heading towards a University of Michigan budget model where there is little to no state support. President Kaler said he does not believe so. Part of the reason for this, said President Kaler, is because the University of Minnesota is the only public research university in the State of Minnesota whereas Michigan has several. In his opinion, the State of Minnesota continues to value higher education. Going forward, however, it will be important for the University to tee up strategic conversations with the state in order to demonstrate its value.

In response to a question from Professor French about the University's student population, President Kaler said there is a net out migration of college-aged students in Minnesota. The reality is it is actually quite difficult to get admitted into the University of Minnesota. For example, the average ACT score this year will be 28.3, which means it is getting progressively harder to get accepted here. He said in his conversations with parents, he emphasizes besides having a good ACT score, it is important that students finish high school strong. President Kaler went on to say that the University uses a holistic evaluation system with respect to admissions; there is no ACT score alone that will get students accepted at the University, and there is no ACT score that will keep students out. A lot of factors are taken into consideration during the admissions process, which is a human process, not a rubric.

Professor Campbell commented that in the committee's recent discussion with SVP Burnett and at other times throughout the year, the committee struggles with the fact that legislators and citizens of the state do not understand what the University does. President Kaler said he is aware of this issue, and cited a few examples. He noted that the University faces quite a bit of headwind when it comes to explaining about the great work that is done here.

Professor Campbell raised another issue facing the University and that is faculty retention. Highly talented faculty are leaving the University because the salaries are not competitive. The practice in many colleges requires faculty to go out and get a retention offer if they expect to receive a competitive salary. President Kaler said he and Provost Hanson are aware of this issue. He does not understand why faculty are being told they need to get a counter offer. While there are things the University does to reward and retain faculty, he agrees that having faculty go out and get counter offers in order to get a salary increase is not a wise policy. He said he would bring this issue up again with the deans.

Another topic that came up during the FCC's conversation with SVP Burnett was the need to look at areas within the University where the institution is not "best in class," said Professor Campbell. This seems like a tremendously difficult issue to take on. President Kaler acknowledged that while this is a difficult issue to tackle, it can and has to be done. However, besides identifying areas where the University is not best in class, it needs to identify new programs, centers or efforts where the University could excel, but it does not do that either. It is very difficult to get these conversations started, and this is a structural/management challenge at the University because the administration manages money centrally, but it does not centrally manage people, headcount, or programs. Currently, there is no mechanism by which to identify the lowest functioning units in each of the colleges. While the deans regularly make decisions about how they will allocate resources within their respective college, what the University does not do a particularly good job of is identifying academic programs that should be closed. Doing

this is administratively equivalent to conducting a post tenure review. The University is not alone in doing poorly in this area; this seems to be a malady that impacts higher education in general.

Professor Kyba asked President Kaler about his thoughts on the University of Minnesota Foundation and its endowment. Based on Professor Kyba's experience, he believes UMF is underperforming in the area of alumni/early donor engagement and building relationships, and he went on to share a personal example. Is there room for improvement when it comes to building the endowment considering the University is the only major research university in the state? President Kaler commented that this is interesting feedback, and noted that UMF is actually quite high functioning. This year, for example, UMF is on track to raise \$300 million. In the last three years, UMF has raised the most money in its history. UMF's cost to raise a dollar is amongst the lowest of its peers. With that said, it does not mean there is not room for improvement. In President Kaler's opinion, UMF could do better in engaging donors who give by cultivating these relationships. Additionally, UMF needs to work on generating large gifts.

Along these same lines, said Professor French, it seems like the University has less endowed professorships compared to a number of other institutions. In response, President Kaler said, this is partially attributable to the size of the University, and he agreed that on a per faculty ratio, the University likely does not have as many endowed professorships as other institutions.

In light of time, Professor Campbell thanked President Kaler for his time and a good conversation.

Before adjourning, Professor Campbell reminded members that the election for the FCC vice chair would be conducted electronically. A call for nominations, including self-nominations, was sent out earlier this week, and once the nomination period wraps up on Monday, May 22, there will be an electronic vote.

6. Adjournment: Professor Campbell also reminded members that the FCC has one more meeting this academic year and that is on Thursday, June 8, and he hopes members are able to attend. Hearing no further business, Professor Campbell adjourned the meeting.

Renee Dempsey
University Senate Office