

Classroom Advisory Subcommittee (CAS)
April 17, 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: Learning Space Plan and the Compact Process; Discussion and Planning for Next Year]

PRESENT: Maria Sera (chair), Ryan Bean, Mark Bergen, David Crane, Elise Eckert, Kent Kirkby, Jeff Lindgren, Thomas Michaels, Peng Peng, Mary Steffes

REGRETS: Donalee Attardo, Mike Hofer, Roberta Kehne, Christine Peper

ABSENT: Suvadip Sinha, Susan Spanovich

GUESTS: Bob McMaster, vice provost and dean, Office of Undergraduate Education; Joe Schultz, deputy chief of staff, Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost; Jeremy Todd, director, Office of Classroom Management

1. Learning Space Plan and the Compact Process

Chair Maria Sera called the meeting to order and welcomed Bob McMaster, vice provost and dean, Office of Undergraduate Education; Joe Schultz, deputy chief of staff, Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost; and Jeremy Todd, director, Office of Classroom Management, who were present to discuss the Learning Space Master Plan that CAS had proposed in 2014, and why it had not been pursued. Schultz said that learning space is complex, as it touches many different entities on campus, such as Facilities Management, the Office of Information Technology, the Office of Classroom Management, the Center for Educational Innovation, etc. He said that there was some discussion around the plan, but the decision was made to pause and return to it in the future, due to the level of complexity and other priorities. McMaster added that there was no decision made *not* to pursue a plan, but that there were questions around who would lead the effort, as well as a lack of available resources due to budget cuts. Sera said she felt that undergraduate education should be a high priority, but often new spaces focus on research and learning space is neglected. McMaster said that that did not align with his understanding, as Bruininks Hall was built to house learning space, student support services, and study space, Folwell Hall had been remodeled to improve learning space, and that the Tate Hall remodel included large lecture halls and teaching space. Sera said that in the case of the new Institute for Child Development building that is in the planning stage, faculty had asked for a classroom and were told that this was not an option. McMaster said that this was helpful feedback, and said that faculty's needs should be represented through the dean, who should discuss them with the provost. Sera clarified that a classroom had eventually been added to the plan, but that the starting point had been framed in reference to research needs.

McMaster then explained that there are two critical points in the decision process-- the compact process and the Capital Oversight Group (COG). Through the compact process, money is allocated for general classroom upgrades. The COG takes the requests that come in, prioritizes them, and puts together the 6-year capital plan. Schultz added that the provost is a member of the COG and represents faculty interests. He explained that the 6-year capital plan is a never ending queue, and if projects get stalled like they did in 2016 when there was no bonding bill in the state legislature, everything gets pushed back. However, he said, once a project gets on the 6-year plan, Facilities Management meets with constituents during the pre-design process in order to help ensure that needs are met. McMaster added that the Office of Classroom Management may not be brought into a project if the current space does not have classrooms, since the assumption is often that the needs of the building remain the same.

Sera then asked what the provost's priorities are in terms of learning space, and McMaster answered that there are a few major initiatives over the next few years, but that is difficult to plan due to uncertainty around funding. These initiatives are:

- Increasing the number of active learning classrooms through converting existing classrooms to more interactive space (such as adding interactive tables, moveable chairs, etc.)
- Increase the number of study spaces and coordinate them. It is easy and inexpensive to put more single tables and chairs in hallways and nooks, and this keeps students on campus and engaged with campus life, which is important.
- Build or convert an existing building into a new chemistry lab facility. Smith and Kolthoff Halls are at capacity. One idea is to convert Fraser Hall to a chemistry lab, but this would require completely gutting the building, which would be costly.
- Create a vibrant academic community on the St. Paul Campus. A committee is currently being formed to work on this.

Sera said that Monique MacKenzie, director, Planning and Space, Capital Planning and Project Management, had suggested inserting consideration of learning space needs into the compact process and asked McMaster's thoughts on that. McMaster felt that adding questions to the compact process was not a good idea, and rather suggested that a member of the Classroom Advisory Subcommittee could meet with the Twin Cities Deans Council in order to make them aware of CAS and open up a dialog between the two groups. McMaster offered to approach the Deans' Council about getting CAS on the agenda. Schultz said that the compact process works as it is designed to work, and that the COG responds to the needs that are articulated to them; the solution lies in better articulating needs to the COG.

Thomas Michaels asked what consideration is given to disability accommodations when planning new spaces. McMaster answered that the Office of Classroom Management and the Disability Resource Center (DRC) work very closely together, and that all new or renovated spaces should be accessible.

Sera thanked Schultz, McMaster, and Todd, and they left.

2. Discussion and Planning for Next Year

Sera announced that Michaels would chair the committee in the 2017-18 academic year and asked for members' ideas on what issues the committee should address. She said that talking to the Twin Cities Deans Council would be a big priority, and David Crane suggested that opening different channels of information in general would be useful. Mark Bergen proposed that another priority should be just to get the word out that CAS exists and can be a resource or advocate for needs related to learning space. Michaels added that he is interested in looking to the future in terms of learning space, and also said that he would talk with the dean of the College of Food, Agricultural and Natural Resource Sciences regarding the plan to revamp the St. Paul Campus, as a St. Paul space plan could serve as a model for a campus-wide initiative. Bergen said that it would be great if CAS could work closely with the committee in charge of this plan for the St. Paul Campus. Sera said that space for accommodated testing might be another issue to pursue in conjunction with the Disabilities Issues Committee, and offered to put Michaels in touch with Peggy Martin, chair of the Disabilities Issues Committee. Roberta Kehne added that the DRC would ideally like a testing center in order to destigmatize accommodated testing, and Sera observed that this would be useful for distance learners, too, as they may have to come to campus to do certain exams or labs.

Members thanked Sera for her leadership over the last year, and thanked Michaels in advance for chairing next year. With this, Sera thanked members for their service and adjourned the meeting.

Amber Bathke
University Senate Office