

Senate Committee on Student Affairs (SCSA)
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 reflects the views of, nor are they binding on, the senate, the administration, or the Board of Regents.

[**In these minutes:** Provost's Joint Task Force on Student Mental Health Report; Equity, Access, and Diversity (EAD) Resolution on Counseling Records; Office for Student Affairs Spring Updates; Council of Graduate Students (COGS) Mental Health Resolution; Campus Committee on Student Behavior (CCSB) Procedure Change Request; SCSA Resolution on Student Mental Health]

PRESENT: Bri Keeney (chair), Megan Sweet, Kendre Turonie, Thomas Bilder, David Blank, Cody Mikl, Michael Stebleton, Prashasti Bhatnagar, Chuddy Emukah, Runsheng Ma

REGRETS: Susan Mantell, Emily Lekah, Matthew Loomis, Emma Olson, Jethro Land

ABSENT: Katie Desautels, Michelle Jesse, Alexander O'Connor

GUESTS: Sue Wick, co-chair, Provost's Joint Task Force on Student Mental Health; Gary Christenson, co-chair, Provost's Joint Task Force on Student Mental Health; Jeremy Jenkins, chair, Equity, Access, and Diversity Committee; Danita Brown Young, vice provost for student affairs and dean of students, Office for Student Affairs; Lauren Mitchell, member, Council of Graduate Students (COGS); Kelly Wallin, member, COGS; Christina Mondini, member, COGS; Becky Hippert, senate associate, University Senate Office

OTHERS: Lisa Erwin, vice chancellor for student life, University of Minnesota Duluth (UMD)

Chair Bri Keeney welcomed the committee and members introduced themselves.

1. Provost's Joint Task Force on Student Mental Health Report - Keeney introduced Sue Wick, professor, Departments of Plant and Microbial Biology and Biology Teaching and Learning, and co-chair, Provost-FCC Joint Task Force on Student Mental Health, and Gary Christenson, chief medical officer, Boynton Health, and co-chair, Provost-FCC Joint Task Force on Student Mental Health, to give an update on the work of the task force. Christenson began by reporting that one in three University of Minnesota Twin Cities students has been diagnosed with a mental illness within their lifetime. The Provost-FCC Joint Task Force on Student Mental Health was established because faculty and instructors are stakeholders, and because there are opportunities at the instructional level to contribute to mental health strategies. It is also an opportunity to reevaluate the University's structure and strategies for a coordinated approach to mental health, said Christenson.

Wick noted that the task force was charged with reviewing various reports and resources on

student mental health on the Twin Cities campus and providing the Faculty Consultative Committee (FCC) chair and the provost with insights and observations relevant to the role of faculty and instructors. The task force has worked to develop strategies for:

- Engaging University faculty and instructional staff and fostering a sense of ownership of the institutional need to find solutions;
- Educating University faculty and instructional staff about the status of and resources for student mental health on the Twin Cities campus;
- Training faculty and instructional staff to recognize and respond to behaviors that signal student mental health concerns; and
- Encouraging University faculty and instructional staff to contribute to positive student-mental-health environments and to the reduction of stigma associated with mental health problems.

Additionally, the committee was charged with development of action steps related to these strategies and to the recommendations from the 2016 Provost's Committee on Student Mental Health report, and with reviewing the original charge and work of that committee and suggesting to the provost the committee's future composition and direction.

The taskforce is composed of 14 members, some with dual functions, said Wick:

- Six faculty/instructional staff
- Four students/postdocs
- Five staff in administrative/service roles
- Two co-chairs
- One representative from the Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost

Additional input was received from the Academy of Distinguished Teachers, the FCC, the University Senate, and discussions with academic advisors and other stakeholders.

Wick reported that the task force recommendations generally address:

- The need for instructors to acknowledge their role in student mental health;
- Best practices for instructors to prevent unnecessary stress in interactions with students in class or individually;
- What instructors need to know to recognize and respond effectively to student mental distress;
- What units need to do to support instructors;
- How the University leadership can support best practices.

Exact recommendations from the task force need to be reviewed by Colin Campbell, chair, FCC, and Provost Karen Hanson before they are more broadly released, said Wick.

Keeney asked if these recommendations were system-wide, or specific to the Twin Cities campus. Wick responded that the focus was on the Twin Cities campus, as this is most relevant to the provost's role, though resource links will be made available for system campuses. Christenson added that these recommendations are applicable to all instructors on each campus. The Academy of Distinguished Teachers is system wide, noted Wick, and they will make sure all links are current for the system campuses.

David Blank asked if one of the recommendations would be required training for faculty and instructional staff, as those who may need optional training may not seek it out. Wick responded that the group is strongly encouraging training, and that the group was hoping for broad support from units. Christenson added that this will be up to the administrators who implement these recommendations, but the concept of the training is skill building and tools for instructors. Michael Stebleton, committee member on the task force, noted that he saw this training as a professional development opportunity, providing resources to instructors. Keeney added that she would like to see this training offered to instructional staff, for example, directors of graduate studies (DGS).

Keeney asked what the communication plan was for these recommendations. Wick replied that this information would be disseminated to deans, then to associate deans and faculty.

Cody Mikl asked about the resolution from the Council of Graduate Students (COGS) on student mental health, which calls for an overarching strategic plan. Was this part of the work of the task force? Christenson replied that the majority of the requests in the COGS resolution are related to services, which is not part of the charge of this task force; he noted that he was aware of the resolution and believed that administration was working on drafting a response. There is some lack of recognition in the resolution of behind-the-scenes efforts, he added; for example, the waitlist issue. Even with a 25% increase in the need for services, Boynton Health has effectively eliminated wait lists for appointments, he said. Mikl responded that the elimination of waitlists is a major accomplishment. Wick noted that the task force could recommend how to continue to assess this need, perhaps in committee.

2. Equity, Access and Diversity (EAD) resolution on counseling records - Keeney introduced Jeremy Jenkins, chair, Equity Access, and Diversity Committee (EAD), to discuss the [EAD resolution on counseling records privacy](#). Jenkins began by providing an overview of a situation at the University of Oregon in which a student's counseling records were accessed by the University during litigation, resulting in a lawsuit. This was legal, he said, as these records were covered by FERPA, but not HIPAA. In 2015, EAD began looking into this issue at the University of Minnesota, and consulted with the Office of the General Counsel (OGC). OGC said that while they would not attempt to access counseling records of students related to litigation, they were hesitant to institute a policy requiring this. EAD members felt that OGC may have a conflict of interest on this issue, and the group went on to consult with Student Counseling Services (SCS), Active Minds, and others on the formulation of this resolution. Jenkins reported that EAD passed this resolution in January, and that it is on the April University Senate docket; Disabilities Issues Committee and the Academic Health Center Student Consultative Committee (AHC SCC) co-signed. Currently, he said, the resolution is under review by the Senate Committee on Educational Policy (SCEP), the Senate Committee on Faculty Affairs (SCFA), and the Social Concerns Committee.

David Blank asked if the last sentence of the resolution presupposed knowledge of the content of student counseling records. Jenkins replied that the idea is that these records are not accessed as a fishing expedition.

Keeney asked if OGC had received this resolution. Jenkins responded that OGC has not yet reviewed, but that he had a meeting with them next week to go over the contents of the resolution.

Megan Sweet asked how the resolution could better differentiate FERPA requirements from HIPPA requirements, and said that she had concerns with the term “medical records,” as these records are either counseling or educational records, and the “medical” term could be misleading. Jenkins replied that the implication is that any record from SCS would be covered by this resolution, and that the faculty who drafted the resolution wanted the “medical records” term used so that it could apply more broadly.

Lisa Erwin, vice chancellor for student life, University of Minnesota Duluth (UMD), asked if this resolution was system-wide, and if there had been broad consultation with all of the system campuses. Jenkins replied that there is system-wide representation on EAD. Erwin said that the lack of consultation with system campus administrators or offices and faculty was problematic for her, as the faculty at UMD are unionized and therefore not represented on EAD.

Keeney asked how students had been consulted in drafting the resolution. Jenkins reported that Active Minds had been involved in this issue, as well as the student members on EAD, the AHC SCC, and this committee.

Sweet asked why this resolution was limited to the litigation aspect of the counseling records issue when there are other exceptions to FERPA. Jenkins responded that he was not aware of other instances in which one area of the University forces another to provide data.

Keeney thanked Jenkins for bringing the EAD resolution to the committee, and noted that since the committee did not have quorum, a vote on whether or not to co-sign would be conducted electronically.

(Note: The committee voted electronically, and did not elect to co-sign the resolution.)

3. Office for Student Affairs spring updates - Keeney welcomed Danita Brown Young, vice provost for student affairs and dean of students, Office for Student Affairs (OSA). Brown Young reported that this had been a very busy spring for OSA. Currently, she said, her office was working on student mental health issues, sexual assault resources and funding, and issues surrounding immigration and international students. OSA is working with the GPS Alliance, the President’s Office, and others on issues related to the recent travel ban, said Brown Young. The creation of an Immigration Response Team has been proposed as a “one stop shop” for resources for affected students, likely housed in International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS). This team could help to provide legal, counseling, and messaging to the international student population. This team would also help to identify gaps in resources, she added.

Keeney asked when the rollout of this team would be. Brown Young replied that the team is in the planning stages, and that meetings to determine the group's scope were ongoing. Support and funding still need to be identified, she noted.

Brown Young reported that there has been an uptick in campus climate issues, as evidenced by Bias Response and Referral Network (BRRN) reports on hate and bias crimes. In December, student groups met with the University of Minnesota Police Department (UMPD) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) to discuss violence and student concerns. There was a positive response from students to this event, noted Brown Young. Currently, OSA is helping to plan an event for March 31, 2017, sponsored by the Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action (EOAA), UMPD, and others regarding free speech, hate speech, policy changes, and how to proactively prevent incidents. Additionally, in an effort to better support cultural, religious, and atheist issues, OSA sponsored a luncheon and received rich student feedback. 120 groups were invited, and 75 attended. OSA will look to do similar events in the future, said Brown Young.

Regarding campus sexual assault, in January, President Eric Kaler put together a group with representation from across the system to look at how the institution approaches education and response. This is a major issue nationally, said Brown Young.

OSA formed a task force in the fall to look at alternative funding for cultural centers, noted Brown Young. The task force submitted its recommendations to the President's Office in January, and there has been agreement that these groups move off of the student fees process in order to provide them with more consistent resources. A structure needs to be created, which includes increased advising support (which they do not currently receive), and space, she said.

Keeney noted that the COGS resolution on student mental health called for the hiring of an additional care manager. Brown Young replied that the current care manager position was added last March, and that there has been a huge increase in cases since that time.

Thomas Bilder brought up the issue of food insecurity for students, and reported that the three-day event hosted by the Minnesota Student Association (MSA) ran out of food by the first afternoon. Brown Young responded that Boynton Health has been working to help create a food pantry for students, and that Dave Golden, director of public health, Boynton Health, was currently working on ways to expand the pantry.

Chuddy Emukah asked about the effects of the travel ban on international students, noting that his colleagues had indicated they were afraid to leave the country for fear they would not be able to return. Brown Young replied that the GPS Alliance is advising students on issues related to the ban, and that typically the group was advising international students not to travel out of the country. She noted that the GPS Alliance had identified all potentially impacted students and was having targeted conversations. By the time the travel ban went into effect, said Brown Young, most students were already in the country for classes; there was one student that had difficulty returning, but the issue has now been resolved.

4. COGS Resolution on Student Mental Health - Keeney introduced Lauren Mitchell, member, Council of Graduate Students (COGS), Kelly Wallin, member, COGS, and Christina Mondi, member, COGS, to present their group's resolution on student mental health. Mitchell reported that the COGS Mental Health and Wellness Committee had worked over the past couple of years on the issue of student mental health resources, identifying where services exist, and where the gaps are. The first gap is intentionality, said Mitchell; the institution has yet to identify concrete goals and standards of care. As student mental health is part of the core mission of the University, it should be looked at from a system perspective, she added.

Wallin reported that the COGS resolution requests three actions by University administration:

1. Hire additional care managers - Care managers are counselors who specialize in coordinating care for complex and difficult cases. They can also interact with students as social workers, managing their care and making sure they don't get lost within the system. They often assist with insurance issues, communication with therapists, etc.
2. Institute a "Let's Talk" program for students to receive informal care (for example, in the libraries around finals time).
3. Develop a targeted screening for students.

Access to counseling services is most important to students at the University, said Mitchell, and the administration should adopt consistent, transparent measures of counseling wait times (for example, setting a goal of all students being seen within nine days). Blank asked if wait times were currently not transparent. Mitchell replied that Boynton Health and Student Counseling Services (SCS) measure wait times differently, which can be unclear.

Mikl noted that Gary Christenson had just reported that there were no wait times at Boynton Health; are there wait times at SCS? Mitchell replied that yes, there are wait times at SCS, but they are much shorter than last year around this time. COGS is interested in the University making a commitment to ensuring short wait times as demand continues to grow.

Mikl asked what COGS' goals were as far as offerings on campus. Mitchell responded that the group would like to see a nine-day benchmark by which all students should be able to receive counseling services, and that they would like the University to establish a vision for standard of care and a systematic plan to meet those standards. The University should evaluate the limited service model, said Mitchell, or look to an unlimited service model or others. Wallin added that COGS would like to see increased integration between Boynton Health and SCS, as they are not always in synch.

Kendre Turonie asked if COGS had looked into the cost to the University for implementing these changes. Mitchell responded that Boynton Health was working on putting together estimates for an additional care manager and addressing waitlist concerns, noting that it was encouraging to see possible funding models. Mondi added that data shows that these types of services can improve the student experience.

Sweet said that these were good ideas, though noted that resources are hard to come by. How do students feel about increased tuition or fees in order to offer more of these services, she asked? Mitchell responded that the initial numbers she received from Boynton Health were well within what she would be willing to pay, but that the group planned to survey students more broadly. Sweet added that the care manager is a profoundly successful model.

Keeney asked if this resolution was system-wide. Mitchell replied that the resolution could be adapted to system campuses.

Erwin noted that UMD currently offers “Let’s Talk,” made possible not through additional funding, but through reallocations.

Mikl asked if the resolution would be edited to include progress made by the institution relating to COGS’ concerns. Mitchell replied that yes, the resolution could reflect progress made, but that she had not seen additional progress not addressed in the resolution.

Keeney thanked Mitchell, Wallin, and Mondri, for presenting the COGS resolution to SCSA. She noted that since the committee did not have quorum, a vote on whether or not to co-sign would be conducted electronically.

(Note: The committee voted electronically to co-sign the COGS resolution on Student Mental Health.)

5. Campus Committee on Student Behavior (CCSB) procedure change request - Keeney introduced Becky Hippert, senate associate, University Senate Office, to present [proposed changes to the Campus Committee on Student Behavior \(CCSB\) hearing procedures](#). Hippert asked the committee if they had any questions about the proposed changes. Hearing none, Keeney noted that since the committee did not have quorum, a vote on whether or not to approve these changes would be conducted electronically.

(Note: The committee voted electronically to approve the proposed changes to the CCSB hearing procedures.)

6. SCSA Student Mental Health resolution - Keeney noted that in the committee’s discussions with system campus administrators regarding mental health resources, it became clear that those campuses are not resourced in the same way as the Twin Cities campus. She asked if members were supportive of writing a letter, statement, or resolution calling for additional resources. Erwin said that this was an interesting idea, noting that UMD had little representation in faculty governance. She reported that UMD governance groups were also having this discussion, and would likely be supportive. Committee members were in favor of drafting a letter to the Budget 5 with recommendations.

Keeney asked committee members if they felt the group should take any action or make any

recommendation on the Washington Avenue Bridge issue discussed at the previous meeting. Runsheng Ma said that he thought the Washington Avenue Bridge issue tied into the issue of student mental health, and could be part of the same letter requesting additional resources for system campuses. Committee members agreed.

Hearing no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Barbara Irish
University Senate Office