

Minutes*

Faculty Consultative Committee
Thursday, October 30, 1997
1:00 - 4:00
Room 238 Morrill Hall

Present: Victor Bloomfield (chair), Kent Bales, Carole Bland, Gary Davis, Mary Dempsey, Gary Gardner, Virginia Gray, M. Janice Hogan, David Hamilton, Russell Hobbie, Laura Coffin Koch, Leonard Kuhi, Marvin Marshak, Fred Morrison, Harvey Peterson, Matthew Tirrell

Absent: Michael Korth

Guests: President Mark Yudof

Others: Martha Kvanbeck (University Senate), Maureen Smith (University Relations), a DAILY reporter

[In these minutes: Faculty speakers bureau; reports on committee matters (graduate/professional teaching award, intellectual property, semester sabbaticals); discussion with President Yudof (health care, graduate and professional teaching award, public relations, faculty salary increases, other matters)]

1. Miscellany

Professor Bloomfield convened the meeting at 1:05 and drew the attention of Committee members to the agendas for the Senate and Assembly meetings. Professor Hobbie, chair of Business and Rules, reviewed the contents, and noted that a student may be bringing, under new business, a request to delay implementation of the new grading system.

Professor Bland then spoke on the question of a Faculty Speakers' Bureau. She recalled that she had sent an email to Committee members on this subject, outlining ideas that had arisen from conversations she had had with a number of people. The idea arose in the last couple of years because of concerns about the public perceptions of the faculty and was suggested by the PR firm that FCC used. There would be a small cadre of faculty ambassadors, selected on the basis of issues or areas the public is interested in, who would be "marketed" by Institutional Relations. This would be established in such a way that it would be a prestigious group to which to belong, and faculty would be given time to participate. Participants would bring their own expertise to their presentations as well as general themes about the University, in order to increase understanding of what faculty do, at least among influential groups. What is needed is the machinery to support the effort and funding from the administration.

Committee members said they liked the idea, and offered comments:

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- participants would speak about their own work (what they are doing that contributes to making this a great research university) and general themes
- funding for such things as visual aids would have to be covered centrally; faculty could not be expected to pick up the costs themselves
- it may be that in some cases, faculty hobbies may be of as much interest as their professional research (e.g., wine making, cow psychology)

The point, Professor Bloomfield said, is that people who have personal contacts with faculty generally have positive views about them; those who do not are generally neutral or negative. He also reported that President Yudof favors this effort.

2. Committee and Task Force reports

Professor Koch began the committee reports by noting Committee on Educational Policy activities. SCEP has begun looking at academic policies on the Twin Cities campus, and considering the consolidated policies recommended by an administrative group led by Dr. Zetterberg; she said she hoped to bring a package of policies to the Senate or Assembly by winter quarter (or later). There are many variations across colleges, and with the new student system being implemented, such variations are expensive and create layers of difficulty; Dr. Zetterberg and others have reviewed all college policies and tried to identify where they are consistent, where they are not, and where policy changes may be required. SCEP will review those recommendations. SCEP is also dealing with ROTC, distance education, and student evaluation of teaching.

Professor Koch reported, in response to a query from Professor Bloomfield, that there is a committee at work on the award for contributions to graduate and professional education; the question is whether to proceed with nominations and the award when there is no money attached to it. Professor Bloomfield said that the President likes this award and would like to do more to honor individuals, and thought it would be possible to obtain the needed funding.

Another issue is the 1998-99 summer session calendar; originally adopted when semesters were not approved, it runs right to the beginning of the 1999 fall semester. Concerns about that have arisen, especially since that summer session may need to include courses to help students finish their degrees, help students in the transition from quarters to semesters, as well as serve regular summer session students.

Professors Marshak and Morrison assured Professor Gardner that those responsible for implementation of IMG now understand the issue about attribution of faculty teaching activities, and that the activities must be attributed to the individual, not the designator.

Professor Kuhi reported that the Senate Research Committee met and spent most of its time on the revised draft of the intellectual property policy. One major question has been who retains rights to the products of traditional academic activities. The current revision of the policy seems to be an improvement over earlier drafts. The use of University facilities for personal gain is an issue; someone can use a lab to help a company owned by a faculty member, but no one is to use computers for personal

email; something is wrong with this situation, Professor Kuhi said.

Professor Dempsey reported that the Tenure Subcommittee is working on post-tenure review procedures, with Professor Morrison, and will talk with Dr. Bruininks and Dr. Jones about other issues.

Professor Bloomfield turned next to Professor Bales, and noted that there was a need to develop a sabbatical policy for the semester system. Professor Bales said this was on the agenda of the benefits subcommittee, and they are considering modifications to the earlier proposal that one month of sabbatical (with pay) is earned for each year of service; he took note of how the rules must affect A-based and B-based faculty fairly. Professor Bloomfield urged that the Committee on Faculty Affairs develop a proposal for the administration to consider, rather than awaiting action from Dr. Bruininks' office.

Other items on which the Committee on Faculty Affairs is working include health care, faculty indemnification, and internal consulting (making it easier for University employees to consult for pay, something that will be important if the University is to reduce reliance on outside consultants). Professor Bland inquired about the issue of freezing or reducing the number of tenured faculty positions; Professor Morrison opined that while health care is the hottest issue, the BIGGEST issue is the question of tenured faculty appointments versus other kinds of faculty appointments. Units should not be permitted to "wander away" from University policy and interests on this matter, he said.

3. Discussion with President Yudof

Professor Bloomfield now welcomed President Yudof to the meeting, and asked if he issues he wished to take up. He did.

- He is not going to contact the Governor about the health care issue. The Governor has no direct authority in the matter, and the estimated cost of \$5 million to cushion the burden of the change in health care provides for those who wished to continue using AHC physicians, through the State Health Plan, would not likely receive the Governor's support. To spend the \$5 million also raises distribution questions across the University.

The \$5 million is what it would cost to keep the company whole; the University would be paying an additional premium. The President said he thought the change could perhaps be delayed for a period, or a waiver granted, but learned that the company is losing money and the University would have to pay for the coverage.

The President asked about the FCC-SCFA committee working on this matter (it is in place and functioning), and said he would like to do anything he could to provide better health care benefits at lower cost for faculty and staff. After discussion, it was agreed that a preliminary report would be due from the committee by January 15 (which the President would see), and a final report by February 5. The President said that everything should be on the table for the committee to review, and that it should give its honest opinion on what would fix the problem (including, for example, the possibility of getting a "seat at the table" for the University when the State Health Plan coverage is negotiated).

- There remains a significant budget problem in the second year of the biennium; raises for faculty

were not escrowed, funds went to worthy projects, and how the raises will be covered is not clear. The President said he hopes to obtain the \$13 million from the state, but there is some resistance to that idea. One possible source of funds will be a downsizing of the administration, the plan for which will be announced shortly.

- FCC will meet with the candidates for Vice President for Research and Dean of the Graduate School (four candidates have been identified) and for Vice President for Human Relations (this search is not as far along). With respect to the latter, Professor Dempsey expressed the hope that qualifications for the position included some academic experience. President Yudof said that would be an advantage, although he would not disqualify candidates who did not have it.
- The President said he wished to talk more with others about the possibility of ex officio faculty representation on Board of Regents committees; he has heard mixed reactions, from non-faculty groups (including administrative committees). The President agreed with a suggestion from Professor Gardner that the faculty leadership needs more opportunities to interact with the Regents ("schmooze"), and that he should arrange such events.
- There has been thought that faculty should be out speaking with groups about their work and events at the University; Professors Bland and Bloomfield have been urging that such an effort be undertaken in conjunction with University Relations. The President reported that teams are going out, and will emphasize that the University does things for the entire state; Professor Bland will be the FCC liaison with Dr. Bruininks' office. The point is to garner attention for the many beneficial University activities and to connect faculty research with the legislative request. Professor Bloomfield urged that the teams not be limited to scientific areas, that they might draw on the Morse-Alumni winners, and should cover a broad spectrum of faculty endeavors that would be interesting to the people of the state.
- The compacts are going forward, and the President recognized the concern about the lack of faculty consultation. He said part of the reason for the delay is that he wants to see the process shortened and more peer-oriented, and less hierarchical, than in the past. The consultation may not be as good as it should be this year, but the process will be cumulative and can be amended in the future. He added that the first year may be more information-gathering; he said he did not believe in having abstract plans with provisions for implementation.
- He is comfortable with the graduate and professional teaching award, and asked that thought be given to how teaching can be recognized University-wide, and given more visibility and prestige. He recalled that at Texas, there was a group of 20 distinguished faculty to which he could direct questions, with whom a group identity was created, and who could be invited to various University events.

The Committee and the President discussed the office of institutional relations. The report of the consultants has not been submitted, but the President will share it with the Committee when he does receive it. Professor Bland said that there is much happening that needs organization by the institutional relations office. The President reported that he has asked Donna Peterson to do a communications plan, focused on the legislative request, that would consider the role of regents, the role of faculty, and how he should spend his time; he will consult on this plan. He said he was determined not to sit on his hands.

Also discussed, apropos institutional relations, were the structure of the office, the nature of the person who should be chosen to fill the position (the President admitted to being perplexed on this), the need for help on internal communications and work with the colleges, the need to overcome reluctance born of reticence and to recognize the importance of public relations for the success of the University and to take it seriously (to tell those who pay the bills what it is doing), having all communications functions together, the need to extend communications beyond the boundaries of the state (this is a big league place). Professor Kuhi emphasized that the University has a tremendous faculty and tremendous record, but that it ends up being less than the sum of its parts; he maintained that the institutional relations office should have a responsibility to get faculty recognized. President Yudof agreed.

Asked about a faculty speakers' bureau, the President said he endorsed the idea and it was part of his longer-term plan to provide the support for it through institutional relations.

Professor Bloomfield thanked the President for joining the meeting, and recessed for a brief period. [The remainder of the minutes of the meeting will appear with the Committee on Faculty Affairs minutes of October 30.]

-- Gary Engstrand

University of Minnesota