

Social Concerns Committee
September 25, 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:** Introductions and Overview of Governance; Brainstorm Agenda Items for the Year; Trans and Gender Non-Conforming Equity Policy; Central Collection/Compostable Serviceware Resolutions]

PRESENT: Ingrid Nuttall (chair), Lena Brakel, Randy Croce, Linda Frizzell, Nicholas Goldsmith, Aleksander Holleran, Hyunjoo Im, Aseem Kaul, Tristan Kick, Derek Kiewatt, Gabriella Kraus, William Larson, James Mason, Molly Schwartz, Melissa Sellev, Sarah Sexton, Nicole Smiley, Boris Volkov

REGRETS: Abigail Dayton, Zan Gao, Becca Gercken, Alex LaValley, Leah Peterson, Megan Sweet

ABSENT: Alex Oftelie

GUESTS: Stef Wilenchek, director; Melinda Lee, assistant director, Gender and Sexuality Center for Queer and Trans Life

1. Introductions and Overview of Governance

Chair Ingrid Nuttall called the meeting to order and welcomed committee members. She introduced herself and asked members to do the same. Then Amber Bathke, senate associate, University Senate Office, conducted a brief overview of University Senate governance, including structures and procedures.

2. Brainstorm Agenda Items for the Year

Nuttall then invited members to suggest items they would like the committee to consider in the coming year. Members suggested the following topics:

- Continue work on the statement on support for international and undocumented students
- Discuss the new federal guidelines around Title IX
- HIV treatment and prevention especially in communities of color
- Parental leave equity, including for graduate students and fellows, adoptive parents, parents of all genders
- Building renaming, in reaction to the [“A Campus Divided”](#) exhibit
- Immigration in light of the updated travel ban and other pressures
- Continue work on organics recycling and sustainability
- Representation of women, people of color, indigenous people, etc. in photos on walls

3. Trans and Gender Non-Conforming Equity Policy

Next, Nuttall welcomed Stef Wilenchek, director, and Melinda Lee, assistant director, Gender and Sexuality Center for Queer and Trans Life, who had come to consult with the committee on a proposed policy on trans and gender non-conforming equity. Wilenchek and Lee thanked the committee for their time and presented a [PowerPoint](#), which included an overview of the proposed policy, background on why it is needed, and its intended outcomes. Members were supportive of the policy, but made the following comments and suggestions:

- It should be standard practice to ask a new employee their preferred pronouns during onboarding, and to share that information with the new employee's colleagues
- It will be important to consider two-spirited people in indigenous communities in this policy, as the term "gender non-conforming" may be offensive to these individuals
- The process of changing the name associated with a University email account can be difficult, as the Office of Information Technology requires official documentation, which is not always available in the case of a chosen name, to make such a change
- In some cases, such as in healthcare settings and certain research involving health, it is necessary to know an individual's sex as assigned at birth, but in such cases, it should be made clear why the information is being requested and how it will be used.

Confidentiality should be ensured as well.

In the interest of time, and as members had a lot of thoughts and suggestions on the proposed policy, Nuttall invited Wilenchek and Lee to attend a subsequent committee meeting for more discussion.

4. Central Collection/Compostable Serviceware Resolutions

Finally, Nuttall turned the discussion to the resolutions the committee wrote and approved last year, regarding central collection for organics recycling and requiring vendors to use compostable serviceware. Nuttall said that she had met with Dana Donatucci, program development supervisor, Waste Recovery Services, Facilities Management, who had helped draft these resolutions, in order to strategize around how to move them forward. She said that it would be a good idea to visit other committees, such as the Senate Committee on Faculty Affairs (SCFA) and the Senate Committee on Finance and Planning (SCFP) to garner support before bringing the resolutions to the University Senate for action. Kaul Aseem asked how custodians feel about the central collection piece, as it would affect their workflow. Randy Croce suggested checking in with the Teamsters Local 380, which represents the custodial staff, to determine whether there was buy-in for central collection from that group. Melissa Sellew asked whether individuals would still have receptacles at their desks. Bathke explained that as she understood it from Donatucci's presentation to the committee last year, individuals would have receptacles for each type of waste at their desks, but custodial staff would not collect waste from these receptacles; rather, individuals would be responsible for emptying their personal receptacles into the [Quad System](#), which would be amended to include organics recycling. Molly Schwartz pointed out that requiring vendors to use compostable serviceware may pose a challenge to smaller vendors. Nuttall asked for volunteers to convene a small working group on this matter, to work outside the committee with Donatucci. She asked Nicole Smiley to lead this small working group, and Smiley agreed. Nuttall also suggested inviting Donatucci to a subsequent meeting, perhaps the October 23, 2017 one, and members agreed this was a good idea.

In the interest of time, Nuttall adjourned the meeting.

Amber Bathke
University Senate Office