

Minutes\*

**Senate Committee on Educational Policy  
Tuesday, October 18, 1994  
1:45 - 3:30  
Room 606 Campus Club**

Present: Kenneth Heller (chair), Jeff Bauer, Rachel Brand, Anita Cholewa, James Cotter, Elayne Donahue, Robert Johnson, Manuel Kaplan, Laura Coffin Koch, Judith Martin, Ryan Nilsen, Darren Walhof, Gayle Graham Yates

Regrets: Megan Gunnar

Absent: Darwin Hendel, Sara Hornstra, William Van Essendelft

Guests: Vice President Anne Hopkins, Karen Linqvist, Pat Snodgrass (both Human Resources)

Others: none

[In these minutes: Critical measures; Morse-Alumni guidelines; policy review]

**1. Announcements**

Professor Heller convened the meeting at 1:45 and began with two announcements.

- A comprehensive classroom study by external consultants is underway; the Committee will be kept apprised of its work. Dr. Hopkins reported on the work they are doing.
- The critical measures were not presented to the Board of Regents in October but will be taken up in November. The administration does not believe the Board should act on specific numbers. The measures will be revisited at the next meeting.

Dr. Hopkins offered several observations about the measures, based on her reading of the minutes of SCEP when they were taken up. First, the question of the graduation rates of transfer students needs to be addressed; it is a knotty issue about which there have been no conclusions. As of this year, however, their high school records are now available. Second, there is no intent to change the size of the General College as the number of freshmen at the University increases. Third, she and the Dean have agreed that the General College share of minority students will not rise above 30%, about its current level, in order to avoid creating the appearance of a ghetto. Fourth, General College strategic plans have been carefully reviewed by the President, the Provost, and her office, and there is agreement on it. Fifth, the comments about the under-representation of women in some fields is accurate, but not addressed at this level of the measures, which are institutional.

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Finally, she said she was surprised to see the statement that the implications of the research critical measures are that the University would not go after new large research initiatives. That, she said, is absolutely and categorically false; the University will go after anything that matches its strengths, assuming resources can be found. The language in the measures about staying even does not mean a steady state in research activity, only in its funding--and that funding will be increased if at all possible. Faculty should not be concerned; if there is a new opportunity they believe a good fit with the University, it will be sought.

## **2. Morse-Alumni Guidelines**

The Committee then turned its attention to the revised Morse-Alumni guidelines and, in the course of long discussion, agreed on a number of changes.

- There should be a list of perhaps ten examples of the activities for which past award-winners were selected, in order to illustrate the diversity of such activities. The point is to reward ANY outstanding contribution to undergraduate education, wherever it might pop up.
- The distinction between "direct" and "indirect" contributions to undergraduate education will be eliminated; contributions can be made in any of five categories.
- Colleges should be encouraged to help in the preparation of dossiers; deans should be encouraged to be responsible for the dossiers.
- Photographs and videos will be strongly discouraged.

Other points were made in the discussion as well, although they did not lead to changes in the guidelines.

- The award is for UNDERGRADUATE education, but faculty members whose departmental home is in a graduate or professional program are eligible for the award if they are involved in undergraduate education. The award is NOT made for outstanding achievement in post-baccalaureate education, however.
- The award is NOT given exclusively or primarily for teaching, although in recent years the winners have been stellar teachers.
- Those colleges that do not have nominating committees have a much more difficult time handling the process of nominating candidates.
- Most Committee members seemed reluctant to suggest greater nominee involvement in the preparation of the dossier as a means to strengthen it. Different colleges have different traditions in this matter, which should be respected.
- The number of nominees permitted for each college should be reconsidered. It was agreed that the Committee would review the issue in light of the number of undergraduate student credit hours of each college.

The Committee also took up the question of whether or not the award should be a permanent addition to the recipient's base salary (although such a change, if adopted, would not be until at least next year, or later). If that is to be proposed, Dr. Hopkins suggested, the proposal should go to the Senate and then to the administration for review and action, especially since there are budget implications to such a change. Several points were raised.

- The actual amount of money involved, per year, is very small--perhaps \$20,000 or \$25,000. One question is whether or not rewards for faculty members should come from central funds; there are precedents, both with the Rajender increases as well as the standard promotional increases. The salary pool, moreover, is not fixed, and these awards could be new money for salaries--which would not be undesirable, given the University's salary ranking among major research universities.
- If the award is added to the base salary, will not departments eventually offset the award, in the interest of equity, so the net result will be a wash for the winners?
- The University's rewards for education are not at the top of the list, both in terms of money and prestige. This change would make a statement about the importance of undergraduate education to the University.
- This is NOT a good teaching award nor should it replace regular salary increases for classroom teaching; it is for OUTSTANDING contributions to undergraduate education. Good teaching should be rewarded regularly in departments when annual salary decisions are made.
- While the Committee wants to be prudent in its recommendations, identification of funding for the proposal is not entirely its responsibility.

It was agreed, by consensus, that Professor Graham Yates would develop a proposal that could be taken to the Senate and the administration.

Ms. Snodgrass agreed to produce a revised version of the guidelines, based on the discussion, for distribution to Committee members for comment.

### **3. Calendar Subcommittee**

Professor Koch agreed to accept the responsibility of working with Ms. Elizabeth Grundner on the development of academic calendars for the Twin Cities campus, "one of the more frustrating tasks" of the Committee.

### **4. Senate Educational Policies**

Professor Heller reviewed with the Committee the list of agenda items for the year and the Committee's reaction to it; the item that garnered the most support was a consideration of faculty and student obligations with respect to the classroom. The Committee also considered a list of Senate policies that seem to deal with those obligations, some of which date from the 1930s, and agreed that it would do a sweeping review of all of them in order to identify gaps and perhaps to repeal all existing policies that

are no longer needed.

It was agreed that for the next meeting copies of all the policies that have been identified will be provided to the Committee, at which time small groups will deal with subsets of the policies.

Professor Heller then adjourned the meeting at 3:30.

-- Gary Engstrand

University of Minnesota