

Minutes*

Faculty Consultative Committee
Thursday, June 12, 1997
1:30 - 4:30
Room 229 Nolte Center
Part II

Present: Virginia Gray (chair), Carl Adams, Carole Bland, W. Andrew Collins, Mary Dempsey, Sara Evans, Dan Feeney, Gary Gardner, M. Janice Hogan, David Hamilton, Russell Hobbie, Laura Coffin Koch, Michael Korth, Harvey Peterson, Craig Swan, Matthew Tirrell

Absent: Victor Bloomfield, Gary Davis, Fred Morrison, Michael Steffes

Guests: Executive Vice President and Provost-designate Robert Bruininks; Dean Hal Miller and Associate Dean David Grossman (University College)

[In these minutes: University College organization and governance, the Military Science minor, and the role of the faculty]

3. University College Structure and Governance

Professor Gray reconvened the meeting at 3:00 and welcomed UC Dean Hal Miller and Associate Dean David Grossman to discuss the academic oversight of UC, an issue that arose in connection with approval of the minor in Military Science without the knowledge of SCEP or this Committee. This is an issue of interest to faculty and others, she said; for example, she had received an email message from a librarian who said there was insufficient consultation with the libraries when new programs were being considered, and another from a faculty member worried about academic oversight of UC. Professor Gray distributed copies of a letter from Dr. Grossman about the Military Science minor and information that Dean Miller had provided.

Dean Miller said the UC degree-granting authority was given by Senior Vice President Infante as an outcome of the decision to enter the partnership degree programs with area community colleges. UC has the responsibility, along with the Academic Affairs office, to develop the programs and establish partnership degrees.

There is faculty involvement in the partnership degree programs at three levels, Dean Miller said. At the degree planning committees, there are faculty and constituent groups that serve. There have been also ad hoc groups of faculty formed to review the curriculum and programs (he distributed a list of the faculty involved in each). Each program also has a faculty director.

The Military Science minor was established in a somewhat different manner, because it came to

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UC after it had been approved by the SCEP subcommittee on ROTC relations; that occurred in February, 1994. The proposal had been discussed with a number of colleges; the Academic Affairs office recommended it go through UC. So it came to them after subcommittee and Academic Affairs approval. Because of that, and because there were no new courses in the program, they concluded they did not need to form an ad hoc committee; it was a minor, and degree program requirements would remain those set by the University (e.g., liberal education).

Dean Miller recalled that he had spoken with FCC a year ago, after speaking with SCEP, about the historic University College, which was merged into the new University College. They knew then they needed an ongoing faculty governance mechanism that would permit them to replace the ad hoc faculty committees. Such a group could review courses and degrees in advance of their being approved; it could also provide evaluation and updating prior to, during, and at the closing of programs. He turned to Dr. Grossman to explain the structure.

Dr. Grossman distributed copies of UC bylaws and an organizational chart, and explained their contents. UC has four operational units, which replace previously existing units. They also have relationship officers to develop relationships with clients such as corporations, government entities, and so on, and those who will work with colleges; existing partnerships with the colleges will be retained.

Dr. Grossman noted the UC Academic Council, the body intended to maintain academic quality in the programs offered by UC. It is intended to ensure the faculty are engaged in curricular development, in review, and in recommendations to the administration for degree programs that are developed, such as the partnership programs with the community colleges, to address the needs of society and the workforce.

The Council is being formed; it consists of 75% faculty and 25% drawn from community organizations with which UC has relationships (e.g., who employ the program graduates or from the community at large), is involved in the curriculum approval process, and will ensure there is a relevance and currency to what is developed--and serve to advise on terminating programs when they no longer meet societal needs. The faculty directors of each program also serve as ex officio members. Dr. Grossman said he was in the process of contacting faculty who had been "nominated" or suggested to him; the response has been almost completely favorable. The enthusiasm is very gratifying, he said.

Professor Hobbie said his concern is the ingrown nature of the body. The Academic Council approves the programs, but the dean appoints the council; it is not elected by a broader faculty. Professor Swan said a more hostile phrasing would be to note that small colleges typically have a council or committee of the whole, while larger colleges typically have an elected faculty assembly, in both cases so the dean cannot control the membership. What would prevent a UC dean from choosing members of the council so it works the dean's will, so there is no independent voice?

There is nothing in the structure that would prevent that from occurring, Dean Miller said; it will be a matter of the integrity of the council. There is nothing that says the dean has to appoint it; does FCC have a suggestion? Would the Senate be interested in having a role?

Professor Gardner said the council is a good idea, but agreed with Professor Swan's point. He noted that there are policy and review councils in the Graduate School to evaluate programs, and their members are not selected by the Dean of the Graduate School. That is a way to have quality review,

identify priorities, and avoid destructive competition. It would be useful to constitute the council with elected representatives from the colleges, with the chair of SCEP as an ex officio member; the latter would tie the body to the Senate system.

Dean Miller asked if they could be trusted to appoint the council this year, to get it going, and then to change the process for future years?

Professor Evans said that elections by college would be a possibility; another would be a nomination process outside the dean's office. The people who teach in UC, who have a stake in the programs, need to be recruited, yet there must be assurance of an independent voice; it is in UC's interest to have such a voice. FCC members suggested, variously, that the appointment process could be linked to SCEP, or to the Committee on Committees, or through nominations from college curriculum committees; the point is to get people who care.

Dean Miller said he did not see this as a hostile suggestion, and Dr. Grossman pointed out that the council is nominated by the UC dean, but appointed by the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs.

Professor Bland referred to the list of faculty involved in the ad hoc committee for one of the degree programs, and suggested that the members did not seem to her people who would know anything about the degree program. Dean Miller said the degree program has to span a number of units, not just the degree itself, and added that UC did not select any of the members of the ad hoc committees.

Professors Swan and Bland suggested that the programs could better have advisory groups than have members from the employers and community groups on the Academic Council. Dean Miller said such advisory groups already exist. The Committee discussed further the membership of the Academic Council.

Professor Bland inquired what the criteria are for determining the kind of program that the University should offer? Why is construction management a degree program the University should offer? Because it combines civil engineering and architecture, Dean Miller said.

Are there criteria that can be used so that one could say, for example, the cosmetology will not be offered, Professor Bland inquired? These program titles make one uncomfortable; if there were criteria and faculty were making the decisions, then it would be less worrisome. Dean Miller said that if there is a demand that is evident, where the University already provides a large proportion of the courses and they can be "topped off" with a few additional courses--where UC does not have to develop a lot of new courses but they can be assembled to meet a need--then a program can be developed. When the expertise is at the University and nowhere else, they will respond.

Professor Koch noted that some of the courses are offered elsewhere; these are joint programs with MNSCU institutions. They are 2+2 programs, Dean Miller agreed, where the University offers the upper division. It does control the lower division, but the curriculum is planned jointly so that the two parts dovetail.

Dean Miller said, in response to a question, that the partnership degrees are not Bachelor's of Art/Science degrees. He affirmed that it builds off the business degree offered by the University, but

contains different courses. It is not a Bachelor of Science in Business for a variety of reasons that Dean Miller explained; they received help from the Carlson School, but the program is not offered by Carlson. Professor Bland pressed Dean Miller on why Carlson would not offer the program, if it was appropriate for a business school, and if it was appropriate for a university. Dean Miller affirmed that it was; Professor Bland inquired how it was decided what was appropriate for the University to offer.

Dean Miller agreed it was a good question. He said that if there is a need, and the colleges choose not to meet it, and the University has the academic resources to do so, does it say "forget it"? Go somewhere else, or let the need be met by some distance education outfit? The question, Professor Bland responded, is whether the University was totally market-driven or if there was a mission and profile being considered. Dean Miller said they were market-driven, with concerns that reflect the University.

Professor Peterson asked for a clarification of the difference between a Bachelor of Science in Business and a Bachelor of Applied Business. Dr. Grossman said, by example, that the Bachelor of Information Networking was an attempt to move from theory to application--to build off theory but to make it very applied, and to bring it to the workplace of the individual in way that Computer Science or Electrical Engineering does not. The same is true of the Bachelor of Applied Business: it is applications-oriented in a way that the Carlson School's program is not.

To have these kinds of degrees requires giving up something, Professor Peterson pointed out; what courses are being omitted from the Bachelor of Science degrees in favor of more applied degrees? The amount of theory is being reduced, Dr. Grossman said. Professor Hobbie has talked about IT moving away from purely theory back to some more hands-on teaching, and the need to bring the pendulum back somewhat. Perhaps UC moves that pendulum toward an applications approach.

Professor Hobbie said he was very familiar with the Bachelor of Information Networking, and would describe it differently. The difference arises for two reasons. There was a desire by the Computer Science faculty to have the program within their department, an option for their majors. Because there was political pressure to do something cooperatively, however, the money was not available unless the program were offered in cooperation with the community colleges. (That was probably not the case with the other applied degrees.) A computer science requires a series of courses on a variety of subjects; some of the subjects are dropped and substituted with courses on telephony and communication and communication law. It is a specialized computer science, but it is not watered down; the sophomore core is the same. This could be a Master's Degree program from the University, he concluded. It is his impression that the Bachelor of Applied Business may have courses that are not as intellectually demanding as the courses in the regular curriculum, and that with all of these degrees, students must meet liberal educational requirements defined by the UC Academic Council, not those set for Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science degrees.

Dr. Grossman described the degree in Construction Management, noting it was intercollegiate in nature, because the curriculum did not exist anywhere, and thus appropriate for UC to offer. It was developed in concert with representatives of industry, and the advisory committee kept it cross-collegiate, rather than letting it become the captive of any one college. What students get from the program is employability, with a knowledge of architecture (but not an architect), able to function at the work site (but not an engineer), but with sufficient knowledge to function effectively on-site in this emerging profession.

These things have all been addressed by the faculty committees that recommended these degrees, Dean Miller recalled, but they were willing to answer these questions as they are raised at this meeting. The question comes back to what kind of governance structure meets the desires and needs of the faculty that is also responsive to new developments and needs in society for programs that would not necessarily be within one college. They come to the Committee for help with this; they have a good list of faculty members, and will appoint them for this year, but he eagerly wanted advice on changing the process so the Senate is satisfied and so it works. Dean Miller recalled working with Senate subcommittees that met only episodically and with low attendance; he nonetheless complained when the committees on summer session and extension classes were eliminated because he wanted the connection with the Senate. He is now asking for consultation on how to establish this connection.

The process is what important, Professor Bland said, irrespective of who is selected; the question is the right one. Dean Miller said the individuals selected were important now, because he wished to rely on the Council during the upcoming year. He repeated his request that FCC allow him to go forward with the Council as planned for this year, even though the process might be seen as illegitimate. He said he wanted a governance committee that FCC was confident in, and would report to FCC as often as it needed reports, but it had to be a workable system.

Professor Collins asked whether appointment of the Council comes about because there was no longer a UC Assembly. In every college there is some kind of governance structure that oversees the appointment of a curriculum committee; there is no parallel structure in UC, at this point. There is an assembly for UC, Dr. Grossman said, but it is made up of staff, faculty, and students; there is not a teaching and research faculty in UC, and the Council is their attempt to address that absence. It would engage faculty from across the University in what is an institution-wide enterprise, with the concurrence of their deans.

Professor Collins asked what principles were followed in the identification of individuals to serve on the Council; knowing them would provide clues for systematizing the process in the future. Dean Miller said they looked for people who have had experience with UC, but who were not always friendly; they did not want "pushovers." They wanted people who had to be convinced, people who want UC to be credible, who were familiar with the idea of UC and who were willing to invest time in making sure UC has faculty credibility and who were sensitive to external pressures and the need for change. They looked across the University; Dean Miller said he thought that if they had had a process endorsed by FCC, the list might look very similar to the one they developed.

Professor Hogan noted that her college was working on a Master's Degree through UC, and said the University had to be careful to preserve flexibility across units. She was concerned about the impact of IMG on interdisciplinary work, and said there is a need for a governance structure across units for programs to work; UC must provide that leadership, or such programs will fall. The governance group must look at criteria beyond those of a particular college. She suggested that the Committee on Curriculum could identify ways to get nominations for such a committee, and the Council needed to be an effective one.

Professor Gardner agreed University flexibility to move in new directions was important. His major issue was that there be no question about the academic standards in the courses and degrees being

offered. A basic principle is that courses are approved by academic departments, the faculty who teach them are approved by those departments (if they are not regular faculty in the department), and that there be bodies analogous to Graduate School policy and review councils to ensure that there is academic oversight for everything.

Dean Miller said the example of the Graduate School policy and review councils raised questions with him, because they have not seen very creative thinking about the use of Master's degrees. There is no question in his mind, after 26 years, that St. Thomas came from a 4-year liberal arts college to a university that is growing in popularity got to where it is because of professional Master's degrees, and because the University did not move vigorously in that direction. The University is coming very late to the activity, and is second in the market in many areas where it should have been first--it had the resources and faculty, and people were crying for degrees. Dean Miller said he hoped the governance model suggested did not stultify the University.

Professor Gardner said he believed the Graduate School had NOT taken the initiative in interdisciplinary programs, something UC IS doing. That is the positive feature; the issue is the body that takes a look at what is proposed.

Professor Koch said it was important to look at what happens across departments and in the market, at the same time retaining the University's quality and standards. Two items have come from SCEP recently; one is on reorganization, part of which calls for reporting to SCEP when proposed majors and minors are created. The other item is that SCEP has established a curriculum subcommittee for the Twin Cities campus.

Dr. Grossman explained the genesis of the faculty committees, and that the curricula themselves for degree programs were developed by faculty. He also noted that UC is offering some courses under its own rubric; as part of the Academic Council, there will be a subcommittee to review individual courses UC may offer.

Professor Evans said that her reaction to the conversation was that it was important that UC understand the need for a faculty voice in curricular and degree development, and that it had set out to create such a voice. FCC supports what they are doing; the issue is credibility and the process. It is in everyone's interest to have a credible group, because the existence of a part of the University that does not have its own faculty but that initiates degrees and courses makes the rest of the University nervous. On the other hand, what UC is doing is very important, and it must have a body of faculty who understand it well enough that they can serve as ambassadors for what UC is about. UC and the governance structure must work together to build mechanisms that accomplish the goals, and that lend credence to what UC is doing. The point is not that UC is doing things all wrong, but simply to provide reactions.

Dean Miller agreed with Professor Evans, and said he did not want to have to come back to FCC and be second-guessed on everything, so would prefer a system with which FCC was comfortable and which they could live with.

FCC members discussed further the possible selection mechanism for the UC Academic Council. The suggestion of Professor Gardner was that the deans appoint the Council, of the size recommended,

using the various mechanisms the colleges might have, with approval by the Academic Affairs vice president; the units responsible for other academic programs should decide who would serve on the Council. The colleges need to think more about the lifelong learning audience, Professor Gardner said, so putting some responsibility on the colleges to identify individuals to participate would be desirable. Dean Miller said he found that workable; FCC endorsed his proceeding with the faculty members he had already asked to serve for 1997-98.

Professor Koch suggested care be given to the allocation of seats to the various colleges; Professor Evans suggested appointment to rotating positions. FCC concluded that the subcommittee on Twin Cities curriculum would not be the appropriate body to assist UC in academic decision-making.

In response to a query from Professor Koch, Dean Miller affirmed that the only Bachelor of Arts degrees would be offered by the historic UC, through the two existing programs. UC intended to continue to explore the need for additional Bachelor's degree programs; Dean Miller said UC had no desire to be redundant with anything offered by the University.

Professor Gray thanked Deans Miller and Grossman for joining the meeting, and adjourned it at 4:00.

-- Gary Engstrand

University of Minnesota