

**Social Concerns Committee**  
**January 28, 2019**  
**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:** Chair's Updates; Lactation Support Policy Resolution; Discussion of University Initiatives Related to the Incarcerated Population; Proposal for Two Social Concerns Forums]

**PRESENT:** Ingrid Nuttall (chair), Jeff Bieganek, Linda Frizzell, Zan Gao, Becca Gercken, Aleksander Holleran, Hyunjoo Im, Tristan Kick, Aseem Kaul, William Larson, James Mason, Molly Schwartz, Melissa Sellew, Sarah Sexton, Jim Stemper, Megan Sweet, Sydney Wicklacz

**REGRETS:** Abigail Dayton, Gabriella Kraus, Mary Kurth, Nicole Smiley, Boris Volkov

**ABSENT:** Zachary Fischer, Alex LaValley, Leah Peterson, Sydney Wicklacz

**GUESTS:** Daniel McCarthy Clifford, artist in residence, Weisman Art Museum; Professor Keisha Varma, chair, Equity, Access, and Diversity Committee; Sara Benning and Sarah Keene, co-chairs, Lactation Advocacy Committee; Mikaela Robertson, member, Lactation Advocacy Committee

## **1. Chair's Updates**

Chair Ingrid Nuttall called the meeting to order and gave the following updates:

- University history and building names: The report of the committee charged to decide on renaming Coffman Memorial Union has again asked for an extension for submitting their report.
- A Social Concerns and Equity, Access, and Diversity Committee networking time has been scheduled for February 21, 2019 from 10:11 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. It is in Morrill Hall on the Twin Cities campus, but an option for remote participation will be available.
- Nuttall traveled to the Duluth campus in December as part of the effort to improve connection with the other system campuses. She met with leaders and members of the P&A Senate and Civil Service Senate, as well as Duluth campus staff governance. She also attended meetings with Lisa Erwin, vice chancellor, Student Life, and Fernando Delgado, executive vice chancellor, Academic Affairs. One major takeaway from the visit, observed Nuttall, was that each campus has its own governance process and culture. Figuring out how the governance culture works on each campus is just as important as being mindful of the different issues at each campus, she added. Additionally, at the suggestion of Social Concerns member Bill Larson, Nuttall met with Dr. Heather Blue, School of Pharmacy faculty member, on the impact of opioids on campus. Nuttall wondered if the Social Concerns Committee could use its charge to hold campus forums to raise awareness on the topic.

## **2. Lactation Support Policy Resolution**

Next, Nuttall welcomed Professor Keisha Varma, chair, Equity, Access, and Diversity Committee (EAD); Sara Benning and Sarah Keene, co-chairs, Lactation Advocacy Committee (LAC); and Mikaela Robertson, member, LAC. Keene presented a PowerPoint on the current status of lactation support at the University, as well as the EAD/LAC resolution asking for a policy on lactation support.

Nuttall asked whether the LAC had looked at existing policies to see where language or provisions might be added to increase support for lactation. Robertson replied that they had, and gave the example of the Administrative Policy: *Make-Up Work for Legitimate Absences*, to which a FAQ on lactation had been added in response to LAC advocacy.

Aseem Kaul asked if such a policy would have implications for funding, and Robertson responded that it likely would, but that would be something for the policy owners to hash out when and if the administration agrees to create a policy. One suggestion, she said, is that lactation spaces, which are currently departmental spaces, become public spaces like restrooms or hallways. This would move them to cost pool funding, and would transfer responsibility for their cleaning and upkeep to Facilities Management.

Nuttall asked if the resolution was meant to be systemwide. Robertson said yes, and clarified that the LAC had reached out to system campuses for their perspectives. The main takeaway, she said, was that the other system campuses wanted to be involved in the policymaking, rather than have a policy created for them. She also added that it is important to keep in mind that each campus has different challenges in terms of space; the Rochester campus, for example, leases its space, and has less flexibility for use.

A motion to endorse the resolution was made and seconded, and it was unanimously approved.

## **3. Discussion of University Initiatives Related to the Incarcerated Population**

Nuttall then introduced Daniel McCarthy Clifford, artist in residence, Weisman Art Museum. McCarthy Clifford explained that he is a recent Master of Fine Arts graduate, and said he is interested in the University's relationship with prison labor and the role the institution can play in supporting incarcerated people and their families. There are two million people in prison, he stated, and an additional burden is placed on their families and communities through collateral consequences, many of which are financial. The University participates in this problem by purchasing furniture and other goods made by prisoners, who are paid sometimes as low as 25 cents per hour in the MINNCOR program. MINNCOR purports to be a job training program, continued McCarthy Clifford, but participants do not learn skills that are transferable to employment once they serve their time. He informed members that he and other campus community members involved in prison issues had applied for a grant through the Institute for Advanced Studies (IAS) to come up with a program or programs, utilizing the University's resources and vast knowledge base, to provide educational opportunities for incarcerated individuals and create ways for families to communicate affordably with their incarcerated loved ones.

Linda Frizzell suggested that law enforcement could benefit from sensitivity training, noting that the American Indian community represents the largest percentage of incarcerated people per capita. This would be something the University could help with, she said.

Aleksander Holleran pointed out that the University also has contracts with other companies that use prison labor. He suggested proposing on some sort of framework for business ethics in contracting at the University.

Nuttall clarified that the IAS grant, if received, will be used to come up with a focused recommendation for what the University can effectively do to support incarcerated and previously incarcerated people. There might be a role for Social Concerns in this, she said; in the meantime, she suggested that the committee work on the issue of business ethics and ethical contracting as suggested by Holleran. She proposed digging into this issue more deeply at the next meeting, and charging a subcommittee to take on the work, if the committee agrees.

Nuttall thanked McCarthy Clifford, and asked him to keep the committee in the loop about the grant.

#### **4. Proposal for Two Social Concerns Forums**

Finally, Nuttall brought forward two proposals for possible Social Concerns forum. The first proposal was to partner with the Energy Transition Lab on an event they are planning pertaining to carbon pricing options. Nuttall reported that she had talked with Scot Adams, the faculty member who had brought up the issue of carbon pricing to the committee, and that he was comfortable with waiting until after this event for the committee to take action on the issue. Members agreed that this was a good idea, and Kaul suggested that the committee could also discuss what could be done within the University to reduce its carbon footprint.

The next proposal was to plan a forum on the impact of the opioid crisis on campus, partnering with the faculty member Nuttall had met with in Duluth. Bill Larson said that the opioid crisis represents a life or death situation and has many implications across health care. Members felt that the idea needed further discussion. Nuttall suggested talking about ideas for the second forum at the committee's subsequent meeting, and asked members to share their feedback with her prior to that meeting. She also noted that the Faculty Consultative Committee (FCC) had charged a task force on free speech, and stressed that if Social Concerns wanted to work on this issue, it would be important to connect with that group.

In the interest of time, Nuttall adjourned the meeting.

Amber Bathke  
University Senate Office