

Minutes*

**Faculty Consultative Committee
Halloween, 1996 (Part I)
1:30 - 4:30
Room 229 Nolte Center**

- Present: Virginia Gray (chair), Carl Adams, Carole Bland, Victor Bloomfield, W. Andrew Collins, Sara Evans, Dan Feeney, Russell Hobbie, Laura Coffin Koch, Michael Korth, Fred Morrison, Harvey Peterson
- Regrets: Gary Davis, Michael Steffes, Craig Swan, Matthew Tirrell
- Guests: Provost W. Phillips Shively; Senior Vice President Marvin Marshak
- Others: Martha Kvanbeck (University Senate); Mary Sue Simmons (Program for Individualized Learning); Maureen Smith (University Relations)

[In these minutes: public understanding of tenure; faculty representation on the Board of Regents; grading policy; University College/University College Assembly; discussion with Provost Shively about the biennial request, shrinking the size of the faculty, Incentives for Managed Growth, and faculty salaries]

1. Committee Business

Professor Gray convened the meeting at 1:30. For a short while, Committee members discussed the status of the tenure discussions by the members of the Board of Regents. The Committee also heard from Professor Morrison about the status of the Law School filing cards to obtain a "maintenance of the status quo" order. If the cards are filed [which they were], that would mean there is no faculty unit of the University not subject to a "maintenance of the status quo" order.

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING The Committee reviewed a proposal to establish a subcommittee of FCC, the responsibilities of which would be to use every opportunity it can find to talk to the public about faculty roles and responsibilities, the value of faculty work to the economic and social life of the state, and the values of academic freedom. The subcommittee would be ongoing.

It was agreed that the subcommittee would be established; the membership would include the chair and vice chair of FCC, the faculty legislative liaison, and other faculty identified by FCC.

FACULTY REGENT Professor Gray reported on discussions she had. The Committee should continue to pursue the issue, because they may be a reform package on the selection of regents, and the faculty view of desirable changes should be presented. Alternatives to a faculty regent might also be

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considered.

SENATE MEETING Professor Gray reported that the University Senate meeting will be postponed from November 14 to December 5, at which time there will be enough items to deal with. (That date is still during the quarter.)

Professor Bloomfield noted the legitimate frustration of SCEP arising from the inability of the Twin Cities Assembly, because of a lack of attendance, to pass the bylaw amendment creating the curriculum review committee. This leads to the question of whether it would be possible to establish a process for mail ballots, under strictly defined circumstances, for items that must be considered. This idea might be pursued. One fear, Professor Gray said, is that faculty will simply sit in their offices and vote, and the deliberative function of the body will be lost. Professor Bloomfield agreed that use of such a procedure would have to be clearly circumscribed, with debate on a motion having occurred first (but the motion failing because of a quorum), and perhaps only with the consent of the Senate Consultative Committee.

Professor Gray suggested the Business and Rules Subcommittee should take up the proposal.

DISPOSITION OF GRADING POLICY Professor Koch recalled that the Senate, last year, referred to the campus assemblies the proposed grading policy. What action would be taken thereafter was not clear; if the Senate does not adopt the policy, grading remains campus policy rather than institutional policy, and there would again be no uniformity were any single campus to make changes subsequently. At present it appears all campuses will adopt the proposal; should it then be brought back to the Senate for action, barring changes in the policy on individual campuses without Senate approval?

Professor Adams said his understanding was that the Senate's policy was NOT to have a uniform policy, but to have a guideline which each assembly will, it is hoped, adopt. If not, and the aim is an institutional policy, the Senate could simply have passed the policy last year, and not given the campus assemblies the option to consider it. If there was no opportunity for choice, the policy should have been sent for information, not action.

Professor Koch said she would look into what the intent of the Senate was.

The Senate position could be changed, and perhaps the campus actions should be reviewed before the Senate takes up the issue. The present policy, however, allows variation; that could be changed.

2. University College

Professor Gray now pointed to a handout about University College, and specifically whether, or how, the University College Assembly -- a Senate body -- should be continued. What is the desire of the Committee with respect to the UC Assembly?

It was noted that the document merging the old University College with the new University College (the old CEE) included a provision that the University College Assembly, under a different name, would continue to oversee the two individualized degree programs that currently exist in the (old)

University College. Is this to be a Senate body, or an independent body operated by the (new) University College?

Professor Bloomfield reported that he had spoken with Dean Hal Miller about this; he said he had reached the conclusion it does not make sense to have the UC Assembly reporting to the Senate, any more than it would make sense to have the Graduate School reporting to the Senate. The Senate and Assembly have committees that report to the body; the UC Assembly is quite different, and CEE -- before it became University College -- did not report to the Senate. Why should this unusual reporting relationship continue? If this is the position taken, the bylaw creating the UC Assembly could simply be deleted.

Professor Adams said one distinction was that CEE never had responsibility for degree programs, whereas the old UC did. The question was, what was the faculty body responsible for the curriculum in the old UC degree programs? CEE, as the new UC, DOES have responsibility for degree programs, which is a change. Whether that is worrisome is not clear, but that is the distinction.

Professor Gray called on Ms. Simmons, Acting Director of the Program for Individualized Learning, for comments. Ms. Simmons said the proposal to keep the UC Assembly intact was made primarily because that body governs the two programs (Program for Individualized Learning and Intercollege Program) in the old UC. It is critical, as the two programs go through a transition to the new UC, that they find avenues to continue faculty involvement and faculty governance; these programs are faculty-dependent. The programs need not only participation in the programs' academic content, but also oversight and guidance. They want to be sure, as they merge into the new UC, that their programs retain their credibility and integrity.

The question of the parallel with the Graduate School is a good one, Professor Adams said. The difference is that there is a mechanism in the Graduate School for a faculty component to guide programs, a structure that is not dictated by the administration. It is not put together under Senate auspices, but absent such a mechanism, Ms. Simmons's concerns are legitimate. He said he has similar concerns about the new UC.

Professor Bloomfield pointed out that the UC Assembly has not come before the Senate in the last couple of years or brought any business; it has not been functional in terms of its relationship with the Senate. One reason to do away with it is that it does not do anything.

Ms. Simmons responded that there may not be a rationale for retaining the tie to the Senate, but there is a strong rationale for maintaining a faculty governance committee that oversees the two programs. She emphasized the critical importance of a faculty council that sets and guides the academic content and policy of these degree-granting programs.

Provost Shively had joined the meeting, and noted that the new UC does not report to a provost, it reports to the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs.

The parallel with the Graduate School fails, Professor Gray maintained, because of the difference in size; governance for a small unit such as the old UC will not spring up, while the Graduate School cannot be ignored. Also very different, Professor Evans pointed out, is that every graduate program is

faculty-run; the governance system in the Graduate School is a logical outcome of that situation. What is being described in the old UC is not programs that are faculty-run; the Committee should think twice before spinning them off and inviting them to set up a faculty committee if they wish. She said she would tend to favor some structure that would permit it to be linked to the Senate.

Professor Gray, with the quick consent of other Committee members, proposed delegating the issue to the Committee on Educational Policy for a recommendation. Professor Koch agreed that a recommendation would be returned in two weeks.

This issue is reminiscent of the conversations that the Committee had in Crookston, Professor Bland remarked. Does the Committee have a responsibility to help ensure the vigor of governance in the various colleges? That is what the provostal faculty consultative committees were intended to do, Professor Gray replied. As a general matter, however, this Committee should keep track of how to govern the various new ventures that are appearing.

3. Discussion with Provost Shively

Professor Gray welcomed Provost Shively to the meeting.

Dr. Shively said that one thing on his mind, through all the storm right now, is to build and maintain a truly fine research university. Except for the political situation, the University is in a relatively good position to do so. He said he continues to point out that the location in these cities will be an advantage over the next 20 years, for a research university. If it can get past its political problems, the University has not only its location, but also its faculty -- which has taught, and put more into their teaching, than the incentive system would have led one to expect, and is also a very distinguished research faculty. The state is a resource, because it does value education. Finally, the proximity to the University of Wisconsin has the potential for very fruitful collaboration in the long term. The University has much going for it, he concluded.

The most critical thing he can do for the University in the next few years -- apart from helping to address the political problems -- is help in the development and support of a fine research faculty. One thing critical to that is faculty salaries. In the Arts, Sciences, and Engineering (hereinafter ASE) areas they will be doing a lot of recruiting over the next ten years; even if the faculty were to shrink -- a proposition he questions the wisdom of -- there will be a lot of retirements and turnover, and thus recruiting. The University cannot go into heavy recruiting with a faculty salary level near the bottom of the 30 major research universities. It can especially not do so during a period when a lot of faculty may have been telling bright undergraduates not to go to graduate school because there are no jobs.

Dr. Shively said he was extremely pleased that in the biennial request, the single largest item is a request for faculty salary increases above inflation. This request would bring faculty salaries, over two years, to the median of the top 30 research universities, both public and private. In addition to being in the biennial request, the Executive Council and the faculty leadership reached an important oral agreement: the first dollars in the biennial request would go to faculty salaries. That is still only an oral agreement, and many things could happen, but he said he would make it a high priority to ensure that agreement is kept. That means, he pointed out, that funds would go for salaries before the Undergraduate Initiative he so strong supports, before technology, facilities, and everything else. It is terribly important

for many reasons, he said; the most important is strategic, because of the upcoming intense faculty recruiting.

There are some who regard a shrinkage of faculty at the University as an indicator of how seriously planful the University is. Dr. Shively said he believed this is a mistake. He said he is pleased that the biennial request -- while it calls for cuts, because it is a 50/50 partnership with the state -- envisions reductions in faculty less than the shrinkage of any other group of employees. Faculty and certain staff are the point of delivery for what the University does in teaching, sponsored research, service, and research for the state. To single out faculty reductions as the indicator of planfulness ignores the fact that tenure-line faculty are only 23% of the payroll of the Twin Cities campus.

There is a need to seek efficiencies in the University -- he is pushing for them anywhere he can find them -- and that includes use of faculty time and effort. Dr. Shively said he applauds the fact that IT -- in response to a directive from his office to produce 2.5% in either efficiencies or new revenue streams -- is eliminating very small class sections (unless there are good reasons to have them). IT has adopted the Berkeley rule, that unless there is a good reason for it, a lower division class with fewer than 12 students should not count as teaching credit for the instructor; the same is true for upper division classes of fewer than 8 or graduate seminars of fewer than 4 students. Especially in the case of graduate seminars, with 2-3 students in them, there is no reason a department cannot put the material on a directed study basis and give faculty a course of teaching credit whenever they have taught an adequate number of directed study students.

The University must look at all of its resources very efficiently, but the idea that shrinking faculty is an indicator of doing so is simply mistaken. He reported that he had prepared a memo for the Executive Council on the actual savings of shrinking CLA by one faculty member, and is now analyzing all colleges in the same way. In the case of CLA, comparing average salary and fringe benefits of a faculty member 60+ years old with the tuition generated by the courses the faculty member taught, if the faculty member leaves, there is a \$33,000 savings. If the faculty member leaves and is replaced by an assistant professor, again net of tuition, there is a savings of \$20,000. The difference in savings is \$13,000 -- and for that money, the University is losing research power, student-friendliness, intellectual stimulation and expertise available to other faculty, and expertise available to the state. That is not a good bargain, and faculty shrinkage of that sort is not something that should be applauded.

Netting out tuition assumes that other faculty are not picking up the load, but if other faculty must do so, then the faculty-student ratio is being worsened. Even though the faculty-student ratio is not in the critical measures, it should be; it is clear, easily-measured, and has a lot to do with the quality of what is being offered to undergraduates. Even if not a critical measure, the University should do all it can not to worsen but to improve the faculty-student ratio.

For all these reasons, the University should not be aiming to reduce the faculty, but should be finding new revenue streams, if possible, to expand the faculty. It is in the faculty, and some staff positions, through which the University produces much of what it does for the state. That does not mean support services for the faculty are not important, but planfulness should not be measured by reduction in the size of the faculty.

Professor Bloomfield said that he has been asking Senior Vice President Marshak about what

appears to be a decline in faculty numbers in the core of the University, in ASE, coupled with what appears to be a growth in faculty numbers in the periphery. Dr. Marshak has said he has assembled numbers, and that the health sciences faculty has grown by 40-50 faculty over the last five years, while CLA had declined by about the same amount.

Provost Shively said he thought the magnitude of the numbers was slightly smaller, but also noted that Agriculture, Education, and General College have all lost significant numbers of faculty over the last five years.

The biology reorganization is an example of why people need to think institution-wide, Professor Bloomfield said, and get the peripheral parts of the University more involved in the core duties of the University. Such units as CBS or Economics or Psychology in CLA have a teaching mission they are supposed to carry out, and those units are shrinking, while biology in the Medical School and psychology and economics in other units are not. Those things should be looked at together, rather than each provost and dean taking a parochial view. If that is done, Professor Bloomfield said, efficiencies can be achieved while the units also carry out their duties.

Dr. Shively agreed. He said that one thing he has been pleased he has been able to accomplish, one of the first fruits of Incentives for Managed Growth (IMG), was that CLA had voluntarily increased its incoming class by 500 students while, at the time, receiving no economic reward for doing so -- and incurred substantial added costs. The strain was showing last spring. He proposed that the increase be given IMG status, and that CLA's tuition base be adjusted for those students. As a result, with other actions, CLA's budget has stabilized. It is not flush, but it is stable, and it now has 29 faculty searches going on. His argument, once again, is that new revenue streams should be found that can be used to support faculty.

If there is a need for money, there are two ways to meet it: cut what one is doing or find new revenue streams. There is no magic bullet. CLA's needs were partially addressed by new revenue. The ability to generate that revenue was partly a result of the improvements in undergraduate education on the Twin Cities campus and of Mr. Sigler's success in recruiting, which between them were responsible for a 45% increase in new applications. That, in turn, allowed the University to increase enrollment, and to recognize the burden on the college that absorbed the enrollment. It is possible to create virtuous circles, after several years of vicious circles.

Professor Koch inquired about the ease with which the student- faculty ratio is calculated; one should discount the faculty who do very little teaching in order to get a meaningful ratio, she said. The number can be very deceptive. Dr. Shively agreed that it might not quite as easy as thought; one possibility would be to include the major undergraduate colleges and track the numbers over time, and that could be used as a critical measure. Different data might be needed for inter-institutional comparisons.

Professor Bloomfield said he wanted to interject to emphasize that he believes it unfair that the basic science faculty in the Medical School are not counted as potential teachers of undergraduates. Biology reorganization will accomplish that, Dr. Shively said. But as a parent, Professor Gray observed, one does not want to count people who are not deployed to teach. But they should be, Professor Bloomfield maintained, and if biology reorganization is done properly, they will be.

Professor Feeney inquired if Dr. Shively, in his references to "new" faculty, meant tenure-track faculty. Dr. Shively said he did, for the most part. The best way to support fine research faculty and programs, and deploy them to work well with undergraduates, is to have tenure-line faculty working with graduate assistants to teach undergraduates. And using graduate assistants, with the best supervision, to make sure it works well. At a research university, graduate assistants will be used for some teaching; there is not a research university in the country that does not do so.

There are some fields with such a heavy service load, however, that if it were met entirely with faculty and graduate students, the University would have to build up a larger faculty in the field than it would otherwise choose. The size of the faculty should be determined by the needs of the graduate program, not by the undergraduate teaching needs. If there are undergraduate teaching needs that exceed what is needed for a good graduate program, then the program should be supplemented with teaching specialists. Department size should not be driven by the service mission, but rather by what is needed for a fine graduate program. There are perhaps a dozen or so departments in the University that might fit this description.

Professor Feeney then recalled the importance attached to faculty salaries and the upcoming legislative session, and noted the water that had gone under the bridge in terms of tenure. He asked Dr. Shively if the University stood a realistic chance of receiving support for its biennial request, when the very existence of faculty on tenure is being questioned by everyone?

The Governor recently said that his goal for the University is to have it be one of the ten best research universities in the country, Dr. Shively responded. And the Governor fully understands that faculty salaries have to be commensurate with that goal. There is strong support in the state for the University. The conversations about tenure between those inside and those outside the University are always difficult; that does not mean those outside the University do not strongly support it. There are probably a large number of people who think the University should change its tenure system -- but they are MORE concerned that this be a fine university than that the tenure system be changed. The University must make a good case for its request; while it is ambitious, it is one that can be supported by the University's friends, Dr. Shively concluded.

This is related to another issue, he said. The University is making progress in building a fine research faculty and improving the situation for undergraduates, and there is much more that can be done. There is good leadership in place in the colleges and there are good programs under way (such as the Undergraduate Initiative, which will help build up faculty and TA resources where they are needed).

At the same time, there is a cloud of political discord which is so threatening for the University. He has been meeting with IT and CBS departments this fall, and is constantly asked "what can you say to a faculty member we're trying to recruit, about coming here?" Or "what can you say to a faculty member who's got an offer from someplace else?" It is very difficult, Dr. Shively said. There are almost two different processes occurring on two different planes: one is very positive and hopeful (the biennial request); the other is not. It is possible the University can resolve the political problem, and go forward on the biennial request; it is also possible the political problems "will bring everything crashing down."

What he tells faculty who are consider offers elsewhere is that the University has so many good

things in prospect and in process; it also some dangerous things. Why don't you hang on and see how it turns out?

Asked about the impact of the situation on recruiting, and if he'd has specific cases, Dr. Shively said he'd been involved in several key retention cases that had continued for a period of time. So far, of four, two have stayed at the University and two have left. In both instances, there were other things going on. There is no "crash" going on, now, but he is anticipating there will be problems in both recruitment and retention.

In recruitment, the salaries are important, Professor Bland said; how do the numbers look for full professors? Dr. Shively said he believed the situation was worse, for an obvious reason: as the University recruits assistant professors, it must be nationally competitive. Moreover, the variance between assistant professors nationally is not as great as it is with full professors. That is not new, but it will have an effect on recruitment, Professor Bland pointed out; assistant professors know they will become full professors, and "they aren't stupid": they recognize the environment is one of salary inversion.

If the University does bring salaries to the median of the top 30 research universities, that step implies little change for beginning salaries. Those would have to be raised way above the market. Most of what the University will have to do will be more at the middle and upper ranges. At beginning salaries the University is already competitive, and the University is not going to offer MORE than it needs to.

Professor Gray inquired what changes Dr. Shively anticipated might occur in the provostal structure and the march toward IMG after a new president arrives.

The reason for changing the name from Responsibility Center Management to Incentives for Managed Growth is because what the University is looking at now is very different from what was envisioned a year ago. Then, a full-blown RCM system was proposed; now, the University has backed off everything to do with space. What is being dealt with now is tuition -- which would continue almost no matter who is president, because the University has been moving toward it over the last several years. The other major change is in indirect cost recovery, which includes a shift to direct costs; the big change is that the resources would go the college that obtained the grant, rather than the Graduate School and Research Vice President holding a matching fund. These might be debated, but they are not radical changes. There are no big changes envisioned in facilities.

Dr. Shively also commented briefly on the provostal system and its relationship to the Academic Affairs vice presidency and the President, and on the question of a uniform salary structure. It is possible a new president would change the provostal system, he concluded. It is possible to have a structure that worked either with it or without it.

The Committee then discussed at further length the issue of salary increases that were awarded for 1996-97. In the AS&E colleges the salaries delivered were very close to the 3% guideline the President issued, Dr. Shively said, although it was delivered in quite different ways in each of the four units. The University will have to do better than that in the future; all it did this year, at best, was hold its position.

Professor Bloomfield said he would like Dr. Shively's advice on communicating with the public. The Committee met with Tom Swain to talk about the issue. The Committee realized that faculty and administrators who have responsibility for communicating with the public have very different ideas about what is effective. The most striking example is that many faculty felt the article by Don Gillmor and a colleague, comparing Minnesota to Wisconsin, was very good. The administrators were unhappy about it. The faculty a neophytes; he is only new in the administration himself. It seems that once one starts doing public relations, there must be a stance of "determined optimism": the problems are always in the future and never in the past. If the University does not receive its increase, it will sink, but one cannot say the University has already started to sink.

Dr. Shively said he would go part way. The University does not need to hide problems. It can say -- and it is true -- that Minnesota is one of a fairly small number of fine research universities in the country, and therefore in the world. But some slippage has to be noted. There are also areas of improvement. The slippage is in the social sciences; engineering, however, is improving or holding steady. But it is necessary to point to the fragility of the University's position, and one should be frank about where there has been slippage. It is something the University is determined to change, but if it faces continued cuts, it will be unable to do so.

Dr. Shively said he favors being honest, but pointed out that an honest statement can also be upbeat about the possibilities; it is entirely possible to meet the Governor's goal of being one of the top ten research universities in the country, although it may take 5-10 years to get there.

One does not get anywhere selling a battered old shoe, but if one can show a very fine pair of shoes that needs new soles, and that with a little more reworking it would be a very high quality pair of shoes, then the investment can be successfully sought. That, in fact, is how he views the University, he said; it has slipped and sustained real damage, but less damage than one would have expected from the cuts. That, in turn, suggests the University can manage its affairs pretty well, actually.

Considering that state support for higher education, as a percent of the state's budget, has dropped from 12% to 8% over a five-year period, the faculty have proved themselves to have staying power as a fine research faculty and to put more attention into undergraduates than one had any right to expect. With some rebuilding money, the University can do wonderful things.

Professor Gray thanked Dr. Shively for joining the meeting.

-- Gary Engstrand

University of Minnesota