

Minutes*

**Senate Committee on Faculty Affairs
Thursday, November 14, 1991
3:15 p.m.
238 Morrill Hall**

Present: Avner Ben-Ner (chair), Ann Bailly (for Carol Carrier), Ann Fallon, Daniel Feeney, Richard Goldstein, Ruth Kanfer, Morris Kleiner, Steve Laursen, Diane Mulvihill, Lori Schack, Bernard Selzler, W. Donald Spring, Michael Wade

Guests: Roberta Humphreys, Peter Reed

MINUTES

The October 24, 1991 Minutes were approved.

CHAIR'S REPORT

Professor Ben-Ner introduced and welcomed the new student member of the committee, Ms. Lori Schack. He then reported the following:

1. Vice President Robert Erickson will be asked to attend the next SCFA meeting to update committee members on the health plans issue.
2. Pursuant to SCFA's request, Employee Benefits will be sending letters to each employee who carries dependent coverage but did not return the Dependent Eligibility Verification form to remind them of the importance of completing the form. Announcements have been placed in BRIEF and the Employee Benefits newsletter.
3. Steps to correct the problems associated with the closing of the University on November 1 have been taken by central administration. Copies of the University's emergency closing policy were distributed and SCFA members were urged to call Ms. Kvanbeck with any comments or concerns about the policy.

PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL AND SALARY INCREASES WORKING GROUP

Professor Ben-Ner provided some background for the committee by saying that in June 1990 Provost Kuhl, Professor Warren Ibele (chair of the Senate Consultative Committee), and himself met to discuss problems with the compensation practices at the University. The result was the establishment of a working committee to evaluate and recommend improvements. Professor Ben-Ner then turned to Professor Morris Kleiner, chair of the Working Group, to present the committee's report.

Professor Kleiner said his committee met about twice a month during the 1990-91 academic year. A

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preliminary report was prepared in April 1991 which included data comparing the salary structure at the U of M with other Big 10 Universities, plus Penn State and the University of California system. Four issues of particular importance were noted:

1. salary-step system
2. criteria for salary review
3. salary adjustments and how they are made
4. post-tenure review

The Working Group next decided to present a set of alternatives for discussion and review before preparing its final recommendation. Those options were being presented for SCFA's review. Option 1 focused on what might be considered minor modification of the current system. Option 2 provides a system for cost-of-living, annual merit, and special merit awards. Option 3 offers a salary-step system between ranks and within ranks so that at least minimum floors exist.

The Working Group's report outlined the benefits, similarities, and drawbacks of each option. Professor Kleiner pointed out that all three proposals provide for faculty input into the salary determination process. In fact, he said all three allowed for greater faculty involvement than the current system. Option 3 explicitly requires post-tenure reviews every three to five years, Option 2 does not insure that post-tenure reviews will occur, and Option 1 requires reviews for salary determination and for identification of non-performers. Professor Humphreys said the Working Group's intention was not to focus on non-performers but to reward the hard-working faculty which the current system does not do well. Another common feature of all three options is the potential for extra merit funds.

One committee member asked for a clarification of the term "cost-of-living." Professor Kleiner said the Working Group had not defined cost-of-living but will do so in its next draft as it could be interpreted several ways.

Professor Feeney questioned the University's current system which includes wide salary levels that allow for the hiring of assistant professors at levels close to full professors. He said in some cases it would be more profitable for a full professor to resign and be rehired. He did not feel any of the options addressed that problem or provided for salary equity adjustments based on outside market pressures. In addition, he suggested that the Working Group consider the issue of rewarding faculty for loyalty and length of service.

Professor Reed said the Working Group did address some of the issues Professor Feeney brought up and realized there are disparities in programs and salaries. He said the committee was not unanimous in its decisions, but the majority did seem to favor the salary-step system in Option 3.

Professor Spring, also a member of the Working Group, said the committee tried to set up a system of accountability with reviews and that loyalty and years of service could be included in the reviews. He also said that because the vast majority of faculty members are productive, hard-working employees, but not necessarily "super stars," the committee felt there needed to be both cost-of-living increases and merit increases to prevent the possibility of a faculty member going several years without an increase. Option 3 allows for a faculty member to keep up with the cost-of-living and then every 3-5 years make his/her case for a merit increase.

In closing, Professor Ben-Ner asked the Working Group to bring a revised draft to SCFA's December 5 meeting. The committee asked that the following be included in the re-draft:

- 1) statement identifying the common and different features of the three options

- 2) comment on the decision-making process that was used
- 3) explanation of why the various changes would be desirable
- 4) definition of "cost-of-living"
- 5) time and costs of reviews

A motion was then unanimously approved expressing appreciation and congratulations to the Working Group for their excellent work.

OMBUDS REPORT

Professor Michael Wade reported that since SCFA's last meeting, he had attended the October 31 University Senate meeting at which the Ombuds Report was discussed. He told the Senate that SCFA was in the process of reviewing the report and would be making a recommendation on it shortly. He also said several people, mostly students, raised a number of objections to the report. Professor Wade further said his subcommittee had met with Professor Striebel on November 11, and had telephone discussions with two members of the Ombuds Committee.

Mr. Steve Laursen, member of the Subcommittee, said it had become clear that not all committee members had been included in the processes of producing the report and that minutes did not correctly reflect committee meeting actions. Those interviewed by phone strongly encouraged further review of the grievance system.

Professor Wade said his subcommittee will bring a recommendation to the December 5 meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Martha Kvanbeck

University of Minnesota