

Minutes

Senate Consultative Committee October 4, 1990

Present: Warren Ibele (chair), Thomas Clayton, W. Andrew Collins, Amos Deinard, Kathy Diaz, Paul Holm, Norman Kerr, K. Darby Laing, Tim Morse, J. Bruce Overmier, Thomas Scott, Burton Shapiro, Charlotte Striebel, James Swick, Tina Tidrick, Shawn Towle, James VanAlstine, Christine VeLure, Shirley Zimmerman

Guests: Ron Jones (President's Office), President Nils Hasselmo, June Nobbe (SODC), Maureen Smith (Brief), a Daily reporter

1. Reports of the Chairs

Professor Ibele began the meeting by asking Committee members to introduce themselves. The Committee chairs then reported.

- Professor Shapiro reported that a tentative agenda for the year for the Committee on Finance and Planning had been developed; he said copies would be sent to Committee members and asked for comments and suggestions.
- Mr. Towle reported that the Student Senate Consultative Committee had had two meetings thus far; among the issues being dealt with are representation of graduate and professional students on the Consultative Committee (a report on which will be made at the next meeting) and the budget of the Senate and the Consultative Committee.
- Professor Ibele reported that the Faculty Consultative Committee had had two meetings; it had a discussion with Marcia Fluor, it met with the President on the search for the health sciences vice president, it has examined the statements on academic freedom and their possible revision, it has considered options for the governance structure vis-a-vis intercollegiate athletics on the Twin Cities campus (which will be brought to this Committee for information), and it has discussed search procedure revisions made pursuant to the policy adopted last year. The FCC has a long agenda for the year, items of which must yet be sorted out.

Professor Ibele advised that arrangement for items for the agenda of the Committee should be made with Mr. Engstrand; items for the agenda of the Assembly or the Senate should be provided to Professor Collins, who has agreed to serve as coordinator for all matters related to the Senate and Assembly.

2. Committee Meeting Schedule

The Committee agreed that it would have meetings prior to each Senate and Assembly meeting; after brief discussion the schedule for the year was approved unanimously.

3. Open Discussion

Given open time on the agenda, Committee members raised a variety of issues for discussion.

- A change in the rules governing graduate student enrollment and financial aid and the jeopardy in which graduate students would be placed (it was understood that the concerns expressed would first be heard through the regular channels of the Graduate School and central administration); the Council of Graduate Students will be working on the issue.
- The status of a possible "speaker's policy" and its relationship to the three academic freedom statements; it was suggested by one FCC member that it would be appropriate to have students serve on the ad hoc committee to be charged with evaluating whether or not to revise the existing statements. Professor Ibele said he was uncertain about the proposal for a speaker's policy; the Committee appeared to concur with the suggestion that students be added to the ad hoc committee and SSCC would be asked to provide the names of students who would serve.
- SSCC concern about the perceived friction between the students and faculty in the Senate; the students would be interested in hearing faculty views. In retrospect, Professor Ibele said, it is difficult to determine whether or not there was a real division between the two groups; there need not be alarm unless the conditions appear to continue. Settlement of graduate/professional student representation, it was suggested, would permit the situation to return to what most consider normal.
- FICA deductions; unless one is 100% time, there are many fringe benefits one does not receive. The benefits issue is one of concern in the hospital; are there other areas of the University also affected? This issue, another Committee member commented, is one that has been around for a long time, upon which a number of recommendations have been made, and upon which virtually nothing has been done. The situation affects women and the coordinate campuses in particular, about 200-300 people. It was agreed that the Senate Committee on Faculty Affairs should be asked to take up the matter.
- The possible addition of social security taxes to students on work-study funds, which will amount to an 8% reduction in the take-home salary of students and the concomitant increase in payroll expense to the University; is this an issue of concern to the faculty as well as the students?

4. Discussion with President Hasselmo

Professor Ibele welcomed the President to the meeting and invited expression of his concerns. The President in turn welcomed the new members of the Committee and said he hoped that he could assist in ensuring that the agenda of the Committee would include the most important issues for the University.

The President reviewed briefly some of the comments he had made the previous day in his "State of the University" address. One point is that the University is very strong and can draw on that strength; another, almost paradoxical, is that there are problems and the institution must be frank about

them. The University exists in a time of change and will need itself to change to meet the challenges to it.

The President said he would return repeatedly to the Committee over the next few months to discuss the process to be used to shift resources. The shifts would be programmatic rather than by thinning out existing budgets; the University will have to stop doing some things. It will not be an easy task, he observed; the process will be as open and forthcoming as he can make it and there will certainly be no clandestine decisions or actions. Units will be afforded the opportunity to make their case. The Committee can be of help both in procedural matters as well as in the substantive decision to be made.

The positive goals to be accomplished must be kept in mind; reallocation is a painful process but it is intended to create a better and more effective University. This, he reminded the Committee, is the driving force behind reallocation, not to stop serving people unnecessarily.

The President distributed to the Committee a brief memorandum itemizing the major policy topics to be addressed during the year as well as his Goals and Objectives statement presented to the Board of Regents; he reviewed both documents for the Committee. The topics include:

- The Biennial Request (which is peculiar in that the University has been instructed not to request any additional funding); one change is that priorities are set across the O + M and State Specials budgets rather than within each of the two categories. There will be a single hierarchy of priorities. No other changes in the request have been made since it was presented to the Committee at its retreat.
- Approaches to Reallocation.
- Faculty Salary Distribution System: Academic Affairs has a consultant at work establishing a fair and equitable salary system, one which will introduce badly-needed structure. The system should make it easier to tie the reward structure to performance in research, teaching, and, where appropriate, public service.
- Faculty Performance Review System: Academic Affairs will work with the Committee to ensure that the system is appropriate and takes into account the removal of mandatory retirement.
- Review of Personnel Systems and their administration: The President is engaging a consultant to examine the personnel systems, both academic and civil service, and the way they are administered to determine if there are efficiencies that can be achieved.
- Report of the Liberal Education Task Force: Recommendations are expected which would guide curriculum development over the next few years; both SCEP and the Committee will need to be involved.
- Task Force on the Delivery of Instruction: The President said he has had preliminary conversations about appointing such a group; this would probably have to be separate

from the Task Force on Liberal Education although coordinated closely with it (and perhaps even a subcommittee of the Task Force). The objective would be to look at ways to use the faculty more effectively in their interaction with students and that any rote elements of that interaction be minimized. There is rote lecturing now, he said; information is being transmitted in a medieval mode, in the absence of books and other means of instruction. There are routine elements in a number of disciplines where other methods can be used; he would like to have a thoughtful faculty committee look at these issues.

The President said he would like a recommendation from the Committee on whether or not such a task force should be appointed.

- Revision of Search Procedures: FCC is already taking up. There is a need for flexibility as well as increased recruitment of women and minorities.
- Financial Management System: The project is proceeding.
- Recruitment and Retention of Faculty; Recruitment and Retention of Students: These are activities related to diversity and aimed at the recruitment of faculty and students of color. Special steps are being taken; the Committee should monitor the activities and be regularly brought up to date.
- Interaction with K-12 Education: Inventory is being taken of the many programs the University already has to work with K-12 education; the inventory is to inform the President what is being done as well as to help ensure that resources are being directed to the activities which seem to be most effective. There will be a report to the Regents, perhaps by November; the issues will also be reviewed with the Committee.
- Follow-up on the Page-Merwin Report: The activities will be of primary interest to ACIA but also probably to the Committee.

Committee members offered a variety of views on these items.

The elimination of mandatory retirement is not on his list; the President said that there has been a recommendation from the Senate which Academic Affairs is considering. Vice President Kuhi will be discussing the issue with the Committee in the near future.

The President mentioned use of consultants; it would be useful, it was suggested, for the Committee to meet with them early. The President agreed.

In addition to elimination of rote instruction the examination of testing would be useful; the President agreed that it would be useful to consider testing as part of the charge to any task force on instruction.

The President was asked to request whoever is coordinating examination of the Faculty Performance Review System to meet with the Committee, in particular so students could understand

their role in that review.

Concern was expressed about the budget agreement in Washington and its possible impact on student financial aid; the President said the Higher Education Advisory Council has made its views known to the Minnesota Congressional delegation. This issue is one that should be added to the list of topics for the year; the Committee might also wish to speak with Dick Caldecott.

The Faculty Salary Distribution System and the Faculty Performance Review System are very closely linked; salary distribution should be related to performance review. Is this a dual charge to be given to the same group or individual? The President said it could be two different individuals but that they must clearly work together. The salary system being looked at, he added, would be a step system but one with flexibility so that one could jump two or more steps if warranted. The concept, moreover, is one of a cost-of-living system plus a merit system because a merit system which operates at the expense of other faculty whose performance is acceptable is inherently unfair.

About the Page-Merwin report: The Twin Cities media give the reader the impression that the athletic program is an entity unto itself--or that it should be. The President was asked if he believed it possible for the faculty to play a real role in athletics and if so, how? The President said that he did and that they play a role through the Assembly Committee on Intercollegiate Athletics. The faculty, he pointed out, through their governance system, select those of their colleagues who they wish to deal with athletic issues. There is a close working relationship between the administration, the athletic directors, and the faculty/staff/student/alumni ACIA. ACIA, he said, could play as strong a role as it and SCC decides it should. He said that he also meets regularly with the athletic directors; the programs are not orphans.

The question for most faculty, another Committee member observed, is the tension between the expenditure of their time and effort and whether or not there are results that they can perceive --or whether the entire activity has a life of its own and goes its own way without any influence by faculty or student. Is there any indication, the President was asked, that at the national level there seems to be movement toward a better balance, a more rational and defensible role for athletics--so that the faculty could be advised and find it responsible to invest time in the governance of athletics? The President said he thought it was very important for the faculty to invest their time because it is essential that the University maintain control over athletics. While there are strong commercial pressures driving athletics nationally, the discussions at the Council of Ten (Presidents of the Big Ten universities) are encouraging; there is a very strong commitment to embody the philosophy of the student-athlete. Efforts are also being made to work in concert with other conferences, although there is remarkable resistance to even modest changes.

The President noted, in the course of additional remarks, that if one takes into account the performance of all sports the University of Minnesota men's athletic program last year was the most successful department in the Big Ten--it had more championships and high finishes than any other institution. There is clearly balance within the program.

One Committee member recalled that the President had omitted from his State of the University address remarks about the context of higher education; if there is something he intended to say the Committee would be interested in hearing it. The President noted the Committee's interest; he told the

Committee of the recent interest on the part of the AAU in undergraduate education--perhaps for the first time in its 100-year history. The relationship of research to the other activities of the University, and to private sector research and development, and to the role of the faculty are also being discussed.

Exception was taken to the President's comments about "rote lecturing" and the cure perhaps being technology and innovation. The assumption behind such comments imply that instruction can be improved if there are enough gimmicks. Faculty spend a lot of time trying to improve their instruction and their interaction with students; the idea of some task force providing insight on how a faculty member should conduct classes is not appealing. The faculty member is the expert, the one who is doing the teaching as best they can; rather than "rote" teaching it should be considered "traditional" teaching. The best instruction depends on a relationship between the student and the teacher; often technology gets in the way of that relationship. The biggest problem for effective teaching is class size. The problems will not be resolved by a glib approach.

The President responded that that was exactly what he did not say and did not want the Committee to think that is what he said. He is himself a traditional chalk-and-blackboard teacher, he said; small classes and the give-and-take of teaching will not occur unless the University can find a way to convey certain materials to students by other means. The language laboratories are a good example; there is no reason for a faculty member to spend time in pronunciation and grammatical exercises; students can do well on their own and may in fact do better. Differences in delivery of instruction could work in other disciplines as well.

The point is to free faculty members in order to do what all think of as truly traditional learning--where students can be involved in a give-and-take situation. Size and the economics of the institution make such teaching difficult; the effort would be to liberate faculty from the routine elements of teaching in order to intensify the contact with students. He would be horrified, he said, if one argued that the purchase of technology could replace human beings.

Others expressed support for the appointment of a thoughtful task force; even the most refractory, it was said, could learn. Another important factor to be considered, the Committee was reminded, is the variety of ways in which students learn; all faculty could profit from learning about this variety. Another Committee member observed that departments are not doing as good a job of teaching their graduate students how to be teachers; it might be important for young faculty to be exposed to the techniques of instruction because many have had little experience.

The President said he would not go forward without the advice of the Consultative Committee and the support of the faculty. Professor Ibele said he sensed that the Committee supported the proposal if done with care; the President asked that the Committee help formulate a charge (in consultation with Professor John Howe, Chair of the Task Force on Liberal Education).

Professor Ibele thanked the President for his time and comments.

4. The Drug Free Campus and Workplace Statute

Professor Ibele welcomed Mr. Ron Jones to talk about the federal Drug Free Campus and Workplace statute. Mr. Jones explained that he is normally an administrator with the Minnesota

Extension Service but has been on special assignment with the President's Office to develop the University's plan for complying with the federal statute.

Mr. Jones informed the Committee about the intent of the federal statute and how the University is acting to comply. One step is the distribution to all University staff and students a publication on drugs (which has already been accomplished for the staff). Committee members asked Mr. Jones several questions about the effort, such as what is required and prohibited (there will be no new federal statutes; liability is to current laws), whether or not it calls for increased drug testing (it does not), what is the University's obligation (to conduct some education, mostly directed at students but also employees, to provide counseling and referral, and to begin record keeping on what happens on campus), who a student is (one enrolled in an academic program, so not in CEE, 4H, etc.), and reporting requirements (data will be collected beginning with the current year, not from the past; information on individuals is not included).

Professor Ibele thanked Mr. Jones for meeting with the Committee.

The Committee adjourned at 3:00.

-- Gary Engstrand