

Minutes

Senate Consultative Committee May 16, 1991

Present: Warren Ibele (chair), W. Andrew Collins, Amos Deinard, Norman Kerr, Stanford Lehmborg, Karen Seashore Louis, Thomas Scott, Burton Shapiro, Erin Sutter, Jim Swick, Tina Tidrick, Shawn Towle, James VanAlstine, Christine VeLure, Shirley Zimmerman

Guest: John Howe (Chair, Task Force on Liberal Education)

1. Senate and Assembly Docket Items

The Committee agreed on the format of the presentation of the Report of the Task Force on Liberal Education. The Committee, with one abstention, adopted a resolution in support of the report.

There was discussion about reservations expressed by some faculty that the recommendations will be adopted without regard to the availability of resources. The Committee agreed that there was widespread understanding that they would be implemented as new and/or redirected resources became available and that the recommendations will be phased in. This was clearly the understanding reached between the Committee on Finance and Planning and Senior Vice President Kuhl.

Professor Ibele said, in response to a question, that the motion adopting the report would not necessarily go to the Board of Regents, although since they set the annual budget of the University they will control the implementation of the report. The Regents do not typically act on curricula. It may be, however, that the administration will deem the recommendations of sufficient moment that it will wish to take them to the Board. It seems likely, however, that the President and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs will regularly inform the Board of progress on implementing the recommendations--as they do with any major University initiative.

It was agreed that less prescriptive language about the membership of the Council on Liberal Education should be proposed. It was understood that the student membership on the Council should be composed both of undergraduate students and graduate students, preferably teaching assistants. One student member of the Committee suggested that student-faculty relations would be improved if students were to have some say in the selection of faculty members of the Council; the Committee did not act on this suggestion.

Another Committee member suggested that some sort of incentive--perhaps a stipend--should be provided to students to serve the two-year terms on the Council. In terms of financial support for the operations of the Council, it was the view of the Committee that funds would be provided by the Provost's office, not the Senate or the Consultative Committee. Any stipends for students would have to come from Academic Affairs.

Is there any provision for a director of liberal education, one Committee member asked? At Morris, they began with a Council, went to a volunteer director on a half-time appointment, and they have now moved to a full-time director position. It seems likely that a similar development may be necessary on the Twin Cities campus. Perhaps the director could chair the Council on Liberal

Education. It was agreed that effecting the work of the Council will require more than a small amount of released time for a faculty member--but that this is an administrative matter to be addressed by the Provost.

The relationship between the Council and the Assembly Committee on Educational Policy needs clarification, it was observed. The Council will deal with issues clearly affecting educational policy on the Twin Cities campus; it would therefore be desirable to have some clear relationship between the two groups. Too often in the past major educational policy issues have not been directed to the Committee on Educational Policy, which tends to diminish its effectiveness and role. The question had never arisen, Task Force members observed; the Committee concurred that a statement should be made. It was agreed that the Steering Committee would direct the Council to report through the Committee on Educational Policy when it wishes to make recommendations for policies and that it would report this decision to Dr. Kuhl.

2. 1993-94 Twin Cities Campus Calendar

The Assembly Steering Committee approved the proposed 1993-94 calendar, with minor changes, and unanimously voted to put it on the docket under New Business.

3. Future Business

One student member of the Committee proposed the establishment of a task force to examine representation in the University Senate. It was agreed to take up the proposal at the May 30 meeting of the Committee.

The schedule of meetings for the Committee for 1991-92 was approved.

The Committee adjourned at 11:50.

-- Gary Engstrand