

CLASSROOM ADVISORY SUBCOMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MEETING
OCTOBER 6, 2008

[In these minutes: Review Committee Charge, Office of Classroom Management Update, Classroom Needs Assessment Resolution/Policy, Request from the FCC for CAS to Develop a Long-Term Plan for Significantly Improving the University's Classrooms, Call for Agenda Items]

[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.]

PRESENT: Thomas Michaels, chair, Jeffrey Hammer, Michael Hannon, Steve Fitzgerald, Linda Jorn, Roberta Juarez, Jeffrey Lindgren, Priscilla Cushman, William Gleason, Jay Hatch, Jean King, James Hambleton

REGRETS: Michael Berthelsen, Keya Ganguly

ABSENT: Tina Louise Tyler

I). Professor Michaels called the meeting to order, welcomed those present, and asked members to go around the room and introduce themselves.

II). Professor Michaels reviewed the committee's charge with members (<http://www1.umn.edu/usenate/charges/casch.html>).

III). Professor Michaels called on Steve Fitzgerald, director, Office of Classroom Management (OCM), to provide the committee with an OCM update. To begin, Mr. Fitzgerald distributed copies of the 2008 Balanced Scorecard for the Office of Classroom Management (<http://www.classroom.umn.edu/Balanced-Scorecard-2008.pdf>). Salient aspects of this report highlighted by Mr. Fitzgerald included:

- This document serves to report to the University community and central classroom cost pool stakeholders on the 300 central classrooms and OCM's stewardship of these resources.
- There are two types of classrooms on campus, general-purpose and departmental classrooms. General-purpose or central classrooms are designed to meet the pedagogical requirements of a broad range of University community users. Central classrooms are a University asset owned by the Office of the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, and designed to support the teaching and learning needs of any and all colleges and departments. OCM is the Provost's agent for managing these assets. By contrast, departmental classrooms are more narrowly focused, supporting a particular program or departmental need e.g. studios, clinics, etc.

- Units within OCM include Classroom Support, Classroom Technical Services, Classroom Facilities Coordination, Classroom Planning, and Scheduling and Course Database. Mr. Fitzgerald spent time providing the committee with the functional description of each of these units.
- The methodology of the Balanced Scorecard serves as a template to explore 4 questions:
 - How well does OCM use resources?
 - How productive and efficient is OCM?
 - How well does OCM support faculty and students?
 - Can OCM sustain excellence over time?
- OCM uses key performance indicators and performance indicators as well as student and faculty surveys to measure its performance. Using a series of charts, Mr. Fitzgerald highlighted aspects of OCM's performance.
- Funding under the current budget model is below total life cycle requirements but is sufficient to support classroom operations. Unfunded requirements in classrooms, e.g. classroom accessibility, continue to exist.
- The Facilities Condition Needs Index (FCNI) for academic buildings indicates that these buildings are older and in worse facilities condition than the University's overall inventory of buildings. East Bank has the oldest inventory and most problematic classrooms.
- The Science Classroom Building will be off-line as of spring semester 2009, which translates into a loss of 1,000 student seats. Then, in the summer of 2009, 1701 University, a leased building, will be taken out of service and this building has 700 student seats. While the scheduling data reflects that as a campus there have been tremendous increases in the efficiency of using central classrooms, the campus is very close to the margin. The campus will need to do better in terms of the compliance with existing Senate and Provost rules and guidelines in the scheduling arena. Scheduling, in the semesters ahead, will be a critical issue.
- Reports that provide departments with the ability to review their scheduling performance include projected vs. actual enrollment, 60/40 use of the 9:00 – 2:00 peak time period, excess course cancellations, and non-conforming course sections. The University collectively needs to work on doing a better job of spreading courses out over the day/week, stop teaching non-conforming courses, and more accurately project course enrollment.
- Despite the fact that departmental classrooms are managed, maintained and resourced by departments, OCM is increasingly providing more services in this management process, e.g. Resource 25 (R25).
- In 1999, few University central classrooms met the technology needs and expectations of faculty and students. Since that time, however, the University has made great strides, and is a Big Ten and national leader in the area of teaching and learning technology in central classrooms.

Questions and comments from members during the course of Mr. Fitzgerald's presentation included:

- Information like that contained in the 2008 Balanced Scorecard for the Office of Classroom Management needs to be funneled into the administration so that they

take this information into account when the University asks for money from the state legislature for buildings. Mr. Fitzgerald stated that OCM provides information about classroom needs to Capital Planning and Project Management (CPPM), University Services, and Facilities Management (FM). OCM has issues and concerns with respect to classroom needs that have fallen below the priority line that was established by the University as it looks at its overall needs. This committee can help articulate these needs as part of the planning process.

- In terms of the planning process, please explain how some colleges have more resources to put towards classrooms than others. Mr. Fitzgerald stated that there is not a simple answer to this question, and it is more than just the resources that a particular college has that come into play. There is a process for the University to assess its needs, and to look at its tremendous backlog of deferred maintenance. The Facilities Condition Assessment (FCA) conducted by FM serves to quantify this information. Classrooms factor into funding decisions, but are not the sole driver. Central administration would be in a better position to address this question because it actually involves more than just classrooms.
- Please explain OCM's funding sources. Mr. Fitzgerald noted that in partnership with FM, OCM looks at R&R and HEAPR funding for various classroom projects in addition to receiving capital funding. OCM is also heavily involved in leveraging its resources with college and department resources.
- Are there ways that OCM can reconfigure aspects of its current central classroom inventory to facilitate scheduling? OCM, for the most part, has projects taking place all the time. However, getting work done during the academic school year can be challenging. The resolution coming before the committee later in today's meeting specifically addresses the need for "swing space" to accommodate the loss of classrooms as they are being taken off-line during the academic year. Currently, much of the central classroom repairs and maintenance takes place in the summer, but with the campus initiative to bring convention and event business onto the campus during the summer, the timeframe when OCM can work on classrooms has been collapsed.
- Is central classroom utilization on the Minneapolis and St. Paul campus approximately the same? No, stated Mr. Fitzgerald, the St. Paul campus utilization is substantially lower than the Minneapolis campus utilization. The information contained in the Central Classroom Utilization Dashboard conveys this information very well.
- In terms of departmental classrooms, they are often smaller and would not meet the requirements that OCM has for its centrally scheduled classrooms. While that is true, noted Mr. Fitzgerald, the greatest shortage of classroom space is with smaller rather than larger classrooms.
- Is it OCM's goal to have 100% classroom utilization? No, stated Mr. Fitzgerald, the time utilization goal is 71%, the seat occupancy goal is 65%, and the projected vs. actual enrollment goal is +/- 10%. These goals are designed to account for class change time and other reasons. If classroom utilization were at 100% there would be gridlock.
- Do other institutions collect the same kind of data that is captured in the OCM Balanced Scorecard? It would be great to be able to compare how the University

is doing against other institutions. According to Mr. Fitzgerald, OCM is unaware of any institution that has a scorecard that goes into this level of detail in terms of classroom metrics. There are only a few schools that are taking a systemic approach to quantify their performance and activity levels in classrooms. That being said, early in the technology upgrade sequence, OCM did exchange information with Big Ten schools, and the University started in the bottom quartile of Big Ten schools as it relates to technology in classrooms. One of the reasons OCM was created was, in part, due to the University's classroom technology deficiencies.

- How is the scorecard used by OCM? OCM uses this scorecard to reflect what the department is doing during the course of the year. The document serves to highlight the areas of need with FM, CPPM and the administration.
- The information contained in the scorecard needs to be shared more broadly with the University community including but not limited to this committee's parent committees, the Senate Committee on Educational Policy (SCEP) and the Senate Committee on Finance and Planning (SCFP). Mr. Fitzgerald stated that one thing this committee and other Senate committee can do is address the systemic issues that are coming out of central classrooms.
- This committee spends the majority of each meeting listening to a prepared briefing, and there is never any time left at the end of each meeting to discuss next steps. Going forward, please allocate approximately ½ hour of the meeting for discussion. Professor Michaels stated that given this was the first meeting of the 2008 – 2009 academic year, he had encouraged Mr. Fitzgerald to provide the committee with background information on OCM, which was intended to primarily bring new members up to speed about the work of OCM. He then used this comment as a segue into the next agenda item, a discussion of the classroom needs assessment resolution, and agenda items for upcoming CAS meetings.

IV). Professor Michaels reported that based on feedback from Gary Engstrand, Senate staff, the most current version of the classroom needs assessment resolution, as written, actually falls somewhere between two pieces of business the Senate considers, a resolution and a policy. Given that the document more closely resembles a policy, Mr. Engstrand recommended it be written as such. Using the recommendations provided by Mr. Engstrand, Professor Michaels revised the document.

Professor Michaels agreed to send the committee a message that identifies the key drivers behind this document:

- The need for additional classroom and informal student learning space,
- The need for “swing space” to accommodate loss of classrooms and learning spaces when buildings are taken off-line for renovation, and
- The pedagogical needs associated with a discipline that is housed in a particular building, e.g. storage space.

A revised version of this document will be on the November 3 agenda for discussion.

V). Professor Michaels reported that the Faculty Consultative Committee (FCC) would like this committee to develop a recommendation for a long-term plan to significantly

improve the University's classrooms. Professor Michaels agreed to forward the message from Mr. Engstrand with the FCC's request to members following the meeting.

VI). In light of time, Professor Michaels asked members to email him their ideas for future agenda items.

VII). Hearing no further business, Professor Michaels adjourned the meeting.

Renee Dempsey
University Senate