

Minutes\*

**Faculty Consultative Committee  
March 30, 1989**

Present: Mark Brenner (chair), Warren Ibele, Lynnette Mullins, Ronald Phillips, M. Kathleen Price, Burton Shapiro, W. Phillips Shively, Burton Shapiro, James VanAlstine

Guests: Carolyn Chalmers (attorney for Rajender pay petitioners), Acting Vice President Shirley M. Clark, Acting Vice President Gordon Donhowe, Acting Vice President William Donohue, Professor N. L. Gault, Gayle Grika (Footnote), Budget Officer Nick LaFontaine, Professor Geoffrey Maruyama, Professor Charlotte Striebel, Daily reporters

**1. Report of the Chair**

Salaries The meeting began with several Committee members expressing frustration at the preparation and apparent internal release of an academic salary plan without any prior consultation with the faculty. It was agreed to postpone the discussion until Vice President Donhowe joined the Committee later.

1990-91 Calendar Professor Brenner pointed out that it was necessary to reach closure on the 1990-91 calendar question. The widespread dislike for the three-day spring break that year required that some review occur; the principal barrier to change was the overlap of the second summer session with the State Fair. David Berg of MPIS had provided data on enrollment on the St. Paul campus during second summer session: There are slightly over 600 enrollments, of which approximately 250 appear to be students actually attending classes.

It was voted unanimously to place on the agenda of the April 20 Twin Cities Campus Assembly agenda an amended calendar which would create a week-long spring break and thereby push the end of the quarter, and the summer sessions, back one week. Professor Brenner agreed to find out from Academic Affairs if it was too late to make such a change or if a special session of the Assembly would be required earlier (on April 13) in order to permit such a change.

The Committee agreed that consideration should be given to providing space in one of the Como parking lots, with free bus transportation, for those students who are unable to park on the St. Paul campus because of State Fair attendance. There was also agreement that the Senate Committee on Educational Policy--which will hereafter have responsibility for the calendar--should examine more closely the constraints within which the calendar must be set and perhaps attempting to change some of those constraints.

ICR funds Professor Brenner reported that Professor Bruininks, chair of the Senate Research Committee, had asked that the proposal for governing allocation of ICR funds be taken up. Professor Brenner said he had taken up the proposal with the President, who had suggested that FCC review and act on it simultaneous with a central administrative review; the Committee and the administration could then

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discuss and adopt a final set of guidelines.

Faculty legislative liaison Professor Brenner reported that Professor Rubenstein has asked FCC to designate his successor as soon as possible so that a smooth transition can be made. The Committee developed a list of nominees to be asked; Professor Brenner agreed to contact the individuals to inquire about their willingness to take the position. It was also agreed that President Hasselmo's views should be solicited.

## **2. Discussion of the Rajender pay petitions**

Professor Brenner closed the meeting for a discussion with Ms. Chalmers and Vice President Donohue about elements of the proposal for settling the Rajender pay petitions. Professor Charlotte Striebel and Professor Geoffrey Maruyama participated.

## **3. Discussion with Vice President Donhowe**

[Note: Recipients of these minutes who are interested in the discussion of the academic salary plan for 1989-90 are advised to read the April 11 edition of Footnote, which contains an excellent, and much fuller, discussion of the issues.]

Professor Brenner distributed copies of several items dealing with the 1989-90 budget, including the budget principles (a copy of which is attached), academic salary plan, and budget implementation strategy. Vice President Donhowe explained that the salary plan was based on the current Governor's recommendation to the legislature but noted that since some of the funds will be directed to specific State Specials, it is difficult to ascertain exactly how much money will be available. He emphasized that there is no presumption of adequacy nor are the numbers intended to be a projection of the actual amounts which will ultimately be appropriated for salaries. Mr. Donhowe reviewed briefly with Committee members the budget principles.

Among the points raised during the discussion were these:

- This is a first proposal from Vice President Donhowe's office and is just now being circulated for consultation at the central level and with the deans. This is, at present, the only plan that is being considered.
- Mr. Donhowe observed that with respect to tuition, the need to maintain quality plus the need to comply with legislative intent combine to lead to uncomfortable conclusions about the rate of increase.
- These are "first painful steps on the margin" to bring budgeting into accord with planning; this is not a "big bang" change intended to implement Academic Priorities quickly. The idea is to make about one-third of the financial changes envisioned by Academic Priorities each of the next three years. Mr. Donhowe acknowledged that even this rate of change will be slowed down because the realities of the situation do not conform to the arithmetic--for example, some units could not provide the mandated salary increases without considering removal of tenured faculty members. There will have to be a human review of

the plan. Even though this plan may not come at the best time of the year for departments, the University has to start now on implementing Academic Priorities, he said, or it might as well trash the plan. If the University doesn't show that it is serious about its plans, it will be in serious trouble in terms of its credibility with the legislature.

- Several Committee members expressed surprise that implementation of the financial aspects of Academic Priorities would come from salary money; it was thought that reallocation of funding would come from other sources, not from the pockets of the faculty. Mr. Donhowe responded that he didn't know from where else the money would come, since the large majority of department budgets are salary items. Even though this plan was developed initially without consultation, Mr. Donhowe noted, he understood that Academic Priorities is a plan upon which there was extensive consultation. He added that the merit increases for faculty would be the same for all departments, even if not funded centrally, although the market increments could be differ among units. Informed that without additional funds, some departments would be unable to "top off" the salary increases (i.e., delivering a larger increase than actually provided for with central funds) without taking money from line items, Mr. Donhowe noted that this was precisely the intent of the plan.
- This plan could have the effect of pulling excellent departments down toward the mean if the data relied upon for distribution of market funds are peer means. Vice President Donhowe replied that the allocations are by college, not by department; it is assumed that the deans will not pass on the funds by use of a calculator. He commented that his office is making no attempt to judge academic quality--that is a job for the Provost and he'd be run out of town if he tried to do it.
- Vice President Donhowe asserted that this proposal is an example; it is not well- thought out on the comparison issues and that the interpretation of the market data may not be accurate. There are, however, about two months to revise it before the legislative appropriation is known. He also pointed out that he is not a magician; he cannot provide more money than is available and that this proposal is only intended to do what is best in the way of moving the University forward on its plans.
- Vice President Donhowe was provided a graph illustrating the widening gap between salaries of University of Minnesota faculty and those of faculty at the top 13 public institutions; he responded that there were those in the legislature who appreciated the problem but the politics of the situation were all wrong. With an initial recommendation from the Governor of a \$34 million increase, the University started so far back that it couldn't catch up. If the University does modestly better than the Governor's recommendation it will have done pretty well given the lie of the land and the events of the past 18 months.
- It was commented that with the small amounts available, there is some sentiment to go to across-the-board increases rather than wrangle about fine distinctions in merit for the sake of 1 or 2% salary differences. Vice President Clark observed that across-the-board versus merit distribution will be an issue.

- Committee members generally approved of the tie between budgeting and planning but suggested that this was the wrong way to accomplish that goal, if only because of perception. It was argued that it would be simpler and more easily understood if the normal allocation of salary funds were made but were accompanied by instructions on retrenchment to accomplish the objectives set forth in the planning process. If the sensitivity of faculty members to this issue is not addressed, it was pointed out, the University will end up paying for it next year.

Vice Presidents Clark and Donhowe urged that the Senate Committee on Faculty Affairs and the Consultative Committee continue to discuss the salary plan because they wish to receive advice as the plan evolves.

#### **4. Membership of Senate Committee on Faculty Affairs**

It was unanimously voted to recommend to the Faculty Senate that an Academic Professional staff member be added to the Senate Committee on Faculty Affairs. This issue had been deliberated upon during the previous year by FCC and by SCFA and the proposal had received the support of SCFA. The reason for the addition of an Academic Professional is because P/A appointees are provided the same benefits package as the faculty, and thus have an interest in advising on that set of benefits.

#### **5. Open Discussion**

Administrative Salaries It was the view of several Committee members that the salaries being advertised for such positions as Assistant to the President and Assistant to the Executive Director of the Board of Regents were excessively high, inasmuch as they are at or near the average for full professors. The point was made that while it is understandable that high salaries are paid at the senior levels to attract individuals of outstanding talent, the infrastructure salaries are disproportionate to the jobs. Unlike the private sector, where highly-paid executives have staffs who are compensated at significantly lower levels than those to whom they report, the University seems to scale the salaries so that the assistant positions have salaries proportionate to the officer to whom they report.

Bush Sabbaticals It was agreed that FCC would follow up with Academic Affairs on the changes in the Bush Sabbatical program; it may be that the Committee will request that they be removed from the Office of Educational Development Programs.

The Committee adjourned at 4:15.

-- Gary Engstrand