

Minutes*

**Faculty Consultative Committee
January 29, 1991**

Present: Warren Ibele (chair), W. Andrew Collins, Amos Deinard, Norman Kerr, J. Bruce Overmier, Thomas Scott, Burton Shapiro, Charlotte Striebel, Shirley Zimmerman

Guests: Maureen Smith (Brief)

1. Discussion of Reallocation

Professor Ibele began by telling the Committee that he, Professor Clayton (chair of SCEP) and Professor Shapiro (chair of Finance and Planning) would be the last three speakers at the Regents' open forum on reallocation on January 30. He distributed copies of a resolution concerning reallocation which the Committee might adopt. Were that done it would be presented to the Regents. [The Committee had been provided, the previous day, with the expanded reallocation "case statements" for each of the units.]

One question which has been raised, he said, is how the University would know when the reallocation plan is accomplishing what it is supposed to. He told a Daily reporter that the results would be manifested in many ways--by smaller classes, by more professors in classrooms, longer library hours, more scientific equipment, better advising, and improved retention and graduation rates. It is that kind of justification which needs elaboration as the plan is further refined.

One Committee member noted, however, that the plans from the Carlson school called for the opposite: larger sections and a reduction in the number of courses. Professor Ibele's description is what one would expect, for the most part--and what the Carlson school proposes as a professional school may be entirely rational and justifiable in their circumstances. But the description will, presumably, be true for most of the University, it was agreed.

A point made at the last meeting was emphasized again by another Committee member: The reallocation document does not paint a sufficiently vivid picture of how the University will be different in the future as a result of reallocation. As a result, the focus tends to be on the reductions rather than on the new benefits which will accrue. There must be a concrete message sent to the President and Vice President Kuhl that it will be very important to emphasize strongly the positive elements of the plan.

Another concern which must be addressed is the Graduate School. It appears there will be a budget reduction, although the Committee has been assured to the contrary--even though there is nothing in the plan which specifically suggests that the Graduate School will be enhanced. What the Committee has been told thus far on this subject, another observed, is not reassuring; it appears that there will be centrally-controlled allocations in support of research rather than ones made through a competitive peer-evaluation process. The latter process would be more trustworthy and effective in providing institutional research vitality in the long term.

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The same is true of the reductions in the College of Education. Privately, administrators see a new and different role for the College, one where it will provide leadership in educational reforms which will most surely occur in the next 20 years. There is nothing in the plan, however, that suggests that there will be a redirection of activity.

It appears, from a review of the documents, that the Graduate School is the only unit which does not identify closures and gains and expenditures of resources and a final line of intra- and inter-unit allocation. The Graduate School identifies a series of needs but there is no source of funds attached to them. What may be cut are the easy items, such as program reviews and funds for improvements recommended therein. The Graduate School is one of the University-wide units where funds can be applied and have an impact across the institution. More specificity might help, but to say that more money will be put into research through set-ups and so on--on a centrally-determined basis--made one Committee member uneasy. It would be more productive to put the money into the General Research Fund--which is desperately under-funded.

In most cases, it was argued, the documents are not as detailed as the Committee would prefer. In a few cases there are specifics; in most there are broad generalities. One item of special concern to the Finance and Planning Committee, Professor Shapiro reported, was the system-wide initiatives; SCFP has been told that details will be forthcoming. He also noted that these documents are synopses of much more detailed information but agreed that there are widely different levels of precision.

One Committee member drew attention to the recommendation on Waseca and said that the argument to close it is very persuasive on educational grounds; it is junior college, the University should not be in that business, and there are other opportunities in that area. The argument about Crookston, however, is not at all persuasive; it is in much the same situation in principle.

There appears to be the suggestion that Crookston will become a four-year college; "that's absurd in this time when we don't have any money." There may be geographic considerations, but there are other institutions in the area. Other Committee members observed that geography and educational opportunity are indeed factors which differentiate the two campuses.

Another Committee member pointed out that there are two documents. The first, the one submitted to the Board in January, contained some fairly strong statements by the President. In the second document one reads the statement by Crookston, not the one from central administration. [There was some confusion, at the meeting, about the extent to which the unit plans carry the approval of the central administration. It was later clarified that these documents are blueprints for now, subject to further review and revision--over the next three to five years--and are intended to explicate the broader reallocation plan. These explanatory documents are not what the Regents will vote on.]

An item in the system-wide initiatives, it was pointed out, is advanced telecommunications. Before the University gets deeply involved in this area, the Senate Committee on Educational Policy should learn what the administration intends. Given the number of institutions in Minnesota, it would be difficult to justify a massive investment in telecommunications; only if a number of institutions are closed would such a major proposal be warranted.

There was additional discussion of Crookston campus plans; points made included concern about the University remaining in two-year education and whether or not the same sort of financial analysis had been conducted for Crookston as had been for Waseca. The Committee concluded, from the clarification of the meaning of the case statements, that movement on offering baccalaureate education will go forward unless someone removes or stops it. The specific decisions, however, will be in the budget documents each year, so there will be opportunities for the Regents to vote for or against additional steps. It was pointed out, again, that what the Regents will vote on now is the original list of "givers and receivers": Where the money will come from and who is going to get it. The fine detail is less clear; the administration must be pressed for specific information each time the annual budgets are formulated.

It was agreed that it was inappropriate to continue discussing the Crookston campus without the presence of the Crookston faculty member of the Committee. Another Committee added that the idea that the Regents would propose closing two campuses, now, is too big a bite; "there is just no way on God's green earth that that is going to happen. It will be hard enough to do the one." There has been no direct discussion of closing Crookston, it was agreed; closing Waseca will be extremely difficult and to raise the spectre of closing another campus could sink the plan.

It was made clear that the Committee endorsement was of the reallocation plan submitted to the Regents in January, not the case statements. There was, however, residual concern about the case statements "being the law of the land" unless some one forces changes. Starting another baccalaureate program at Crookston is an issue for considerable concern, given the constraints on resources. There are, however, no new dollars proposed for Crookston in the reallocation document, which alleviated some of that concern, although it was observed that "huge amounts of money" will be needed if the baccalaureate degree programs are to succeed. It was also observed that any such change in the programs at Crookston would have to be approved by HECB and reviewed by the governance system.

Discussion next turned to KUOM. One Committee expressed opposition to closing the radio station. It needs to be reorganized and re-oriented to students; a radio station could be--it is not now--very valuable in building community. Once it is closed, the license is lost forever. Another Committee member pointed out that KUOM has been told many times what it must do to overcome its problems and regain its recognition in the community. The plan, in fact, does not go far enough because it calls for keeping KUOM on the air for a short time and exploring simulcast opportunities, which "is the camel's nose under the tent alternative." Building community is desirable but KUOM is a very expensive way to do so; the competition in the medium of radio is "deadly."

Another Committee member contended that for such a radio station to succeed it needs to be on the FM band; few people listen to AM radio.

KUOM has the opportunity to pick up the morning hours, it was pointed out; it should be given the chance. The station has gone in the wrong direction, it was agreed--but have done so because they were told to by CEE. The programming has been dictated by the administration--which is one of the problems. It needs reorganization, but to scuttle it because of a temporary financial crunch would be short-sighted.

Professor Ibele drew the attention of Committee members to the draft resolution. It refers to the materials submitted to the Board in January, not the case statements. It was agreed that a letter to the Board from the Committee will express reservations about some of the specifics of the case statements

and raise issues which require further discussion (including, inter alia, the Crookston program, funding for research, and the process to be used in the transfer of faculty when departments are closed or consolidated).

It was moved and seconded that the Committee endorse the resolution in support of the reallocation plan. The resolution was adopted 7-1. [Subsequent to the meeting, the two other voting members of the Committee also voted in favor of the resolution, so the final vote was 9-1 in favor.]

Professor Ibele asked Committee members to finish reading the documents and prepare a list of specific questions which require further attention. A letter will then be prepared, in the next week or so, to formally transmit the resolution to the Regents.

2. Personnel Matters

The Committee assembled lists of names of individuals who would be asked to serve on the nominating committee for the Committee on Committees and on the ad hoc committee on the governance of intercollegiate athletics.

The Committee adjourned at 2:30.

-- Gary Engstrand

University of Minnesota