

Minutes*

**Faculty Consultative Committee
April 6, 1989
University of Minnesota, Morris**

Present: Mark Brenner (chair), Warren Ibele, Lynnette Mullins, Burton Shapiro, Michael Steffes, James VanAlstine

1. Report of the Chair

Change in the Senate meeting Professor Brenner reported that there had been irritation in some quarters at the insensitivity of the University in scheduling the Senate meeting during the first day of Passover; FCC had recommended and the President had approved changing the date from April 20 to April 27.

Meeting of Senate committee chairs Professor Brenner announced that he had convened a meeting of some Senate committee chairs to discuss the transition to the new committee structure; the discussion had been generally useful, so he has scheduled, for next year, the meetings of the "coordinating committee." This group will consist of the chairs of the Senate committees with the broadest responsibilities; the Committee agreed that only the institution-wide interests should be represented on the coordinating committee, although the membership might vary over the years depending on the pendency of particular issues.

A question was raised about whether SCC could kill a proposal from another Senate committee. At present some committees report directly to the Senate; under the new arrangements, all committees will report through SCC. It was not clear whether or not SCC was intended to have a gatekeeping role when it received committee reports and recommendations.

Minority Affairs task force Professor Brenner reported that Associate Vice President Dolores Cross has asked FCC to nominate members to serve on a "task force" for minority affairs--although in practice it appears the group will serve as an advisory council rather than a task force. The appointments are for three years. It was agreed that FCC and SSCC should make separate nominations of faculty and students. The Committee will review the charge to the task force and agreed to take up nominations at its May 4 meeting.

Reorganization of External Affairs office Committee members have been invited to attend a meeting with Vice President Heydinger to discuss his plans for the reorganization of the External Affairs office. Dr. Heydinger intends to make a brief presentation to the Regents next week; Committee members expressed some dismay that they were being asked to consult on the reorganization only two days before the presentation to the Regents.

Budget and Salary plan Professor Ibele reported briefly on the discussion held at the Senate Finance Committee with Vice President Donhowe. He noted that Mr. Donhowe had added some fine

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tuning to the salary plan after it had been presented to FCC; now it includes a proviso that if a unit needed to retrieve more funds than it had available, it would have to provide no more than one-third of the total. In addition, tenured faculty appointments are to be protected; Professor Ibele said that there was no real answer to a question about protection of tenure-track positions--even though in some units those appointees may be the hope of the future for a department. He also reported that Vice President Donhowe remains uncertain that an adequate market comparison can be done; if it cannot, that part of the salary plan will be scrapped. Committee members expressed considerable doubt that useful market comparisons could be done.

Committee members reiterated their views that any distribution plan not lead to lower raises for outstanding departments. One Committee member argued that across-the-board increases would be "abject folly"; another said it would be "absolutely wrong." The Committee seemed agreed that any levelling distribution would cause the best and the brightest to leave the University; the chief worry expressed at the meeting was that the implementation of a discriminating salary increase plan would require strong deans. It was the view of the Committee that any plan which provided across-the-board increases raised questions about the need to have any deans at all.

Professor Brenner noted that Faculty Affairs might vote in favor of across-the-board increases, on the grounds that the amount of money available to units for increases will be so small that the discrimination required for merit increases would be more work than they would be worth. The President had inquired who he was to believe if Faculty Affairs voted one recommendation and FCC voted a different one; the Committee concluded that since it was the elected body, and the senior committee, the President should heed FCC rather than an appointed faculty committee.

1989-90 schedule A draft schedule of meetings for 1989-90 had been distributed with the agenda. One suggestion was that Senate Finance change its meeting dates so that it could consult with the central officers more in advance of Regents meetings, rather than being dragooned to talk about an issue only days before the Regents meet. Another was that the trip to a coordinate campus be held in the fall rather than the spring because of the conflict with Senate meetings and the rush of year-end business.

Senate vice-chair Professor Brenner announced that the nominating committee has decided to nominate Professor Steffes to serve a second term as vice chair of the Senate. The nomination was met with acclaim from the Committee.

Health science faculty participation in elections The Committee took note of the fact that rarely are faculty members from the health sciences elected to the Consultative Committee and agreed that a way should be found to increase their involvement in University governance. At a minimum, it was agreed that the ballot for the Consultative Committee elections should be more clearly marked.

Center proposal Professor Brenner reported that he had been informed of a proposal, to the U. S. Army, to develop software technology. There were several questions which had been raised about provisions of the proposal and Professor Brenner agreed to explore them with Mr. Potami and Associate Vice President Murthy. The Committee agreed that it did not wish to get into the business of managing proposals but that it should at least take a look at this specific proposal since it had been brought to the attention of the Committee by a member of the faculty.

2. Morse-Alumni Teaching Awards

Professor Brenner asked that the Committee decide whether or not to give its endorsement to the proposal to enhance the Morse-Alumni Teaching Awards. The essential element of the enhancement is that the recipients would receive \$2500 per year for three years and their departments would receive an additional \$2500 for three years for use by the recipient for the improvement of undergraduate education.

One Committee member suggested that the change was unnecessary and that the award itself was what was important; this was too much money to give for the award. It was also argued that some of the criteria for the award are unwritten, and that the central administration has substituted individuals different from those chosen by the Senate Committee on Educational Policy. Other Committee members disagreed with the notion that the monetary award was too large, arguing that it recognized the importance of teaching. The Committee was also informed that recent action by the Regents put final authority for the designation of the recipients in the hands of SCEP so that there should no longer be any manipulation of the names of recipients.

The Committee recessed at noon and then reconvened at 2:00 to meet with the members of the Morris campus Faculty Consultative Committee. Joining the meeting were Professors Ken Hodgson and Mercedes Ballou as well as other Morris faculty and administrators.

Professor Hodgson said that the biggest item of concern to the Morris faculty was salaries; he distributed several tables of data and other information and pointed out to the Committee that the Morris faculty were the lowest paid of any public college or university in the state. All of the recent national publicity about Morris, he said, came from a time when the campus was in better shape. He cautioned that the Morris faculty were not saying they were overworked and underpaid--they like Morris a lot--but that their salaries must be addressed.

One result of their continuing low salaries, Professor Hodgson commented, is that the full professors are throwing up their hands in discouragement; the younger faculty, seeing that discouragement, are inclined to leave. Although young faculty are hired in at competitive salaries, they learn that the career salary increases at Morris are not likely to be attractive.

Committee members discussed with the Morris faculty the concept of marketplace-driven salaries. There is a problem, it was noted, in that it is hard to account for quality in a market-driven salary scheme; there is also inequity in that faculty members work equally hard in those units which are not market-driven. The use of marketplace considerations is troubling to the Morris faculty because when they commit themselves to the academic lifestyle required at Morris, they remove themselves from their disciplinary competition and are no longer in the market. It was also pointed out that since the University had moved to merit, equity, and comparisons with peer institutions in the distribution of salary dollars, the band of salaries for faculty had become much wider. If that continues, it could lead to divisiveness in the faculty; the changes have also led Morris to slip much more than the Twin Cities in comparison with peer institutions.

Vice Chancellor Elizabeth Blake informed the Committee that Morris has never created positions where there had been none before (e.g., from retirement lines) and they have had almost no retirements. They also distribute every penny of the salary increase money to the faculty (except when division heads

ask her to retain money centrally) and have never had any additional funds with which to augment the increases delivered by the University (unlike the Twin Cities campus, for example). Any extra money they have had have been used to hire temporary faculty; Morris has never been funded for the number of students it enrolls. They have finally been given funding for 1600 students--when their enrollment is 2000. There will remain a gap even when they reach their target enrollment of 1750.

The Committee was told that if Vice President Donhowe's plan were implemented, which would require units to provide additional funds for salary increases, the Morris campus would be in serious trouble. The Morris campus has tried to use its funds for its priorities, which revolve around a high-quality undergraduate experience. Two elements have caused it to slip: the absence of high-salary retirements and a lack of access to central retention funds. If the University is to keep the Morris mission of an undergraduate liberal arts education, it will have to recognize that Morris will never use the retention fund and must make special arrangements to support the campus.

Other items touched on in the conversation included funds for professional travel for Morris faculty (they lost what central ICR funds had been provided, and even restoration of that \$8,000 would go a long way) and the extensive use of temporary and part-time faculty--necessitated by the enrollments at Morris. Specifically on the matter of travel, it was pointed out to the Committee that Morris faculty members are funded for the expenses of one-half of one trip up to a total of \$400. Committee members agreed that this situation should be remedied.

The Committee adjourned at 3:00.

-- Gary Engstrand

University of Minnesota