

## **Social Concerns Committee Meeting Minutes**

Monday, April 12, 2010

12:30 ~ 2:00 p.m.

Morrill Hall, 238/238A

[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.]

[In these minutes ~ small group discussions on a campus healthy food initiative and energy policies and renewable resources]

**Present:** Timothy Sheldon (chair), Joseph Marchesani, Lisa Pogoff, Rebecca von Dissen, Marynel Ryan Van Zee, Austin Loeb, Sandra Krebsbach, Benton Schnabel, Kaari Nelson, Kim Robien, Ahmed Heikal, Catherine Jordan

**Regrets:** Shannon Biegger, Carolyn Wardell, Michael Sommers, Katherine Fennelly, Michael O'Day, Elizabeth Shay, Christine Dolph

**Absent:** Ajay Skaria, Jeffrey Thaler, David Golden, Amelious Whyte, Ashley Gaschk

Chair Sheldon welcomed members and introductions were made. A motion was made to approve the March minutes; the motion was seconded and the minutes were approved unanimously. Sheldon explained to members that he wanted to break into smaller groups during the meeting to discuss what to do with some of the data they have collected as a committee. There were two groups formed; one to discuss energy policies and the other to discuss healthy foods on campus. Members were asked to record any questions they have about the topic and suggestions on how to act with the information.

### **Food Initiative Group**

Ms. Pogoff started the conversation, recalling last month's meeting topic about offering more healthy food on campus. She stated that from the information they currently have, it does not sound like a cost-efficient proposition and that is why there is little choice in healthy foods. Professor Robein said that the Student Health Advisory Committee (SHAC) created a petition to enforce University Dining Services (UDS) to list the calories of the food items on menus. Mr. Golden said they should get a jumpstart on that initiative and ask UDS vendors to post the calories. Ms. Nelson asked if students were requesting that other nutritional information be listed as well and Golden replied that it was only calories, targeting the obesity issue in this country. Nelson pointed out that one could buy something that is low in calories but may be high in other undesirable ingredients such as sodium or sugar. Sodium was an item members want to see listed and reduced. Professor Heikal pointed out that labeling on menus will cost money and the University's current budget trouble could stand in the way. Golden said there was a reduction in sales of high fat foods in student halls once fat content was listed on the menu. Professor Ryan Van Zee asked if independent halls could request changes in the food offered. Mr. Loeb said each hall has a dining manager but he is not sure if they are able to make changes

upon request. Ryan Van Zee stated that at the Morris campus, many changes happen through student initiatives and would like to see one on the Twin Cities campus for this issue.

Mr. Loeb stated that another issue at campus dining halls is that the people behind the counter do not seem to have nutritional information available and that perhaps that could be kept behind the counter for reference in case of inquiry. Ms. Pogoff thinks food contents should be listed at dining halls but Heikal pointed out that could be counterproductive, overwhelming students with too much information but it should be available if someone asks.

Members shared thoughts about diet issues with students in the Athletics Department. Mr. Marchesani asked if trainers and coaches have correct nutritional information for their student athletes. Robein responded that there is staff in athletics that works with trainers, coaches and students and will make individual appointments to work with students on their diets. She continued, stating that students' lives often change after leaving the University and/or their sport. Their activity level tends to change but their eating habits do not. Heikal suggested an exit program to teach students what to expect as their lives and activity level change. Loeb thinks some sports may be more of an issue than others. He points out that runners have a tendency to continue in their sport whereas football players do not once they are done with it as a student or professionally.

Golden said that students will be sending a resolution to UDS supporting the listing of calories on menus and would like the committee's support. He likes the idea and thinks it may help UDS to be more health conscious when selecting vendors. Robein liked the idea of students taking the lead with an endorsement from the committee. Pogoff suggested writing a letter of support. Loeb stated that he will be participating in welcome week next fall and including a piece about healthy eating on campus would be a nice addition while introducing new students to the campus.

Mr. Marchesani asked if there has been an impact at the Morris Campus from going trayless in the dining halls. Professor Robein thinks the main focus was to reduce waste and is unsure about the health aspect. Professor Heikal has a concern about increased cost for healthier food for students. Mr. Loeb thinks there is room for middle ground. He said the University could offer healthier choices without those choices being too expensive. Mr. Golden thinks food options in hall dining halls are good but not so good in vending machines. Pogoff pointed out that shopping at a grocery store might be difficult for students, especially those less fortunate with little resources.

Heikal asked if they should discuss smoking as another health concern. Golden said there has been a recommendation on President Bruininks' desk to have a tobacco free campus for some time but the President does not want to sign off on it at this time. Golden thinks the President believes it is too controversial at this time. Pogoff asked if there is anything the committee can do to move the policy forward for a smoke-free campus and then suggested the committee write a resolution to encourage the President to implement the policy. Loeb stated that they should discuss that issue while the whole committee is present. He continued, stating he could see both sides of validity to having a smoke-free campus and that they should have a considerable conversation about it before writing a resolution. Golden said he recalls that there were safety

concerns for those who would need to leave campus in order to smoke as well as the inability to enforce the rule.

Professor Robein said she wants to support what SHAC is recommending and suggested the committee take the recommendation to the University Senate for approval. Golden said he would tweek the student resolution and bring it back to the committee to vote on it. Robein suggested the students present it to the Senate. Pogoff suggested having someone from the Athletics Department come talk to the committee about health awareness in athletics and get their take on the posting of calories on UDS menus.

### **Committee Groups Reconvened**

Ms. Pogoff debriefed the members of the other focus group about their conversation. She listed the group's action interests as follows:

- List calories of food served at UDS dining halls as well as on vending machines.
- Have other nutritional information available at dining halls for those interested.
- List sodium and fat content in UDS menu items.
- Invite an Athletics Department representative to a committee meeting to discuss dietary nutrition and athletes.
- Include a 'healthy food options on campus' piece to welcome week for new students.
- Have committee discussion on encourage the President to move forward with the smoke-free campus resolution.

### **Energy Group**

Professor Jordan spoke on behalf of the energy group. She said they discussed bringing the information from the renewable energy presentation from February's committee meeting to a larger audience. She said the group discussed co-sponsoring an informational forum for those in the University community who are interested. Discussion topics that could be included are as follows:

- What is the University doing in terms of sustainable, renewable energy resources.
- Why have certain things not been done to go forward in this movement.
- The pros and cons of the available options.

Jordan talked about presenting the forum as part of the *It all adds Up* campaign. She said they would need to find a co-sponsor and it would be good if they could find one that could help with supplying a room and help with access to constituents for forum promotion. She stated that they also talked about possibly tacking the forum onto another event, which might be a little easier to produce if in a partnership. Jordan said they want to make sure that they do not duplicate any other possible forums that have already been presented or are possibly in the works.

### **Energy Group Notes**

What we have:

- Lots of baseline data
- Awareness of the scope and implications of decisions

Who is the audience?

- *It All Adds Up* pledge-takers
- People of the campus community that want to be part of the effort

Points of presentation:

- Information on usage; celebrate achievements; next actions
- This is what has/has not been done and why
- Here is what you can do
- Potentially have a panel review of progress and future plans

Find support and resources:

- Possible support from legislators
- Leverage resources from other interested units/centers
- University Service
- IonE
- Facilities Management
- Center on Science Policy
- IEE (public health)

Immediate next steps:

- Connect with related units to see what resources are available
- Sponsor a public forum about energy and pair with other units and/or committees
- Indicate what we are doing in real time
- Piggyback on existing or planned forum (practical breakout)

Professor Heikal asked if the forum would include an open discussion and bring forth recommendations from the audience. Professor Jordan said the forum would be more informational for the community than conversational.

Chair Sheldon asked for feedback on breaking up into groups and members agreed it was helpful. He thinks there is less formality in smaller groups and can be more productive.

### **Future Agenda Items**

Professor Heikal asked how committees derive their agenda items each year. Chair Sheldon stated that he generally asks members what they think the committee should work on and then create a list. He added that they could consider a broader population to garner topics. Professor Jordan stated that some times University-based constituency comes to the committees with issues they would like to see addressed.

Ms. Nelson said she would like to have a representative from the UMPD attend a committee meeting to discuss campus safety. She also suggested promoting a personal safety course on campus. She said the University Recreational Center held a women's self-defense course but only offer them when needed. She does not think that is very proactive and believes there is a need. She does not think the campus community is aware of the availability of such courses. Jordan requested an invitation to the UMPD for a representative to attend the May Social Concerns Committee meeting. Lisa Towry, University Senate Office, said she would invite Deputy Chief Chuck Miner to the May meeting.

Hearing no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:57 p.m.

Lisa Towry  
University Senate Office