

Senate Committee on Educational Policy
-Minutes-
April 16, 1987

Attendance: Andrew Collins (chair), Lawrence Goodman, Ian Maitland, Robert Myers, James Moller, Sheila Corcoran, Naomi Scheman, Crystal Hanscome, Gretchen Kreuter (ex officio), Susan Collison, Patricia Thomas (staff), Roland Guyotte (via telephone from Morris), John Wallace.

Guests: Craig Swan, Joyce Brady, John Malmberg.

Minutes: The minutes were approved as written.

Taborn Report Motion

Andrew Collins reported that the Regents want to act on the Taborn report at their June meeting. SCC would like to see a motion endorsing the report on the Senate record before the Regents act. SCEP has been asked to pass a motion which can be presented to the Senate at its May meeting. A brief discussion concerning the need to create a new position in Academic Affairs to coordinate minority recruitment, retention, and programs was held. It was moved, seconded, and passed that SCEP endorses the Taborn report.

Assembly Committee on Undergraduate Education

The motion to establish an Assembly Committee on Undergraduate Education, passed by SCEP at its March 5, 1987 meeting, was amended by the Senate Consultative Committee. The seventh committee responsibility (to foster efforts to improve teaching effectiveness and responsiveness to undergraduate students) was added and the composition of the membership was changed to seven faculty members and three student members in order to conform to Senate guidelines. It was moved, seconded, and passed to endorse the SCC changes.

Resolution on Financial Supplements in Support of Large Enrollment Courses

Andrew Collins drafted a letter to Vice President Benjamin and Professor Campbell concerning the need for an improved education in the lower division at the University. Professor Collins urged that a plan for reallocating funds specifically for instructional improvement in the 20-25 introductory, lower-division courses most frequently taken by students to meet liberal education requirements be developed in connection with Strategy for Focus and suggested that four steps might be involved in using these funds.

Lawrence Goodman stated that the University is up against a much larger problem than anyone has said. It is a great national problem, he said, and many other aspects of the problem trouble him. He pointed out that in the Institute of Technology, one-half of the faculty did not attend high school or college in this country. By 1992, he predicts two-thirds to three-fourths of the faculty will be educated in foreign countries. Because of this, they do not have a similar student experience with which to relate to the American student experience.

Sheila Corcoran suggested that the wording in step 2 be strengthened to specifically list the aspects of instruction to be addressed by this proposal. Roland Guyotte also suggested that the results of these course changes be made easily available to other departments and faculty members. It was also suggested that where appropriate improvement has been demonstrated, central administration should give serious consideration to

making these funds permanent. John Wallace said it was an excellent, timely letter, and SCEP should come forward with these recommendations. It was moved and seconded that the letter, with the suggested changes, be sent to Vice President Benjamin and Professor Campbell. The motion passed.

Information Systems Subcommittee

Andy reported that SCC was not happy with the lack of progress in developing a proposal for a Senate Committee on Information Systems. He said that Roy St. Laurent, chair of the Student Consultative Committee, was very distressed that this committee isn't in place yet. Roy said the University needs continual input from students and faculty as the technology changes. Robert Myers, a member of the subcommittee, said the subcommittee was meeting this afternoon and would have a proposal ready then. It can be presented at the April 30 SCEP meeting.

Morse-Amoco Selection Committee

Andy said the 1986-87 Morse-Amoco Selection Committee has completed its review of the nominees and submitted the names of the recipients. This year's recipients are: Fred M. Amram, Iris D. Charvat, Maria L. Gini, Brian L. Job, Walter H. Johnson, Gail A. Koch, Susan K. McCleary, Martin W. Sampson III, Mark E. Wilson. The Selection Committee also asked if there could be some flexibility in funding these awards. It really wanted to give a tenth award this year.

Senate Library Committee

Professor Noonan, Chair of the Senate Library Committee, will come to the April 30 SCEP meeting to discuss the issue of peer review of the library staff. This is a problem that falls under the aegis of several committees. Andy will ask the chairs from the Committee on Physical Plant and Space Allocation and the Planning Committee to become involved.

Class Time Per Credit Hour

Andrew Collins said that both the Faculty and Student Senate Consultative Committees were discussing this issue at their meetings today. He is also arranging for SCEP representatives to attend the CI&A meeting next week and the next Student Academic Support Services Committee meeting.

He asked Craig Swan from CIA and Joyce Brady from Summer Sessions to react to the SCEP proposal to extend the 45 minute class hour to 50 minutes and require one hour of class time per credit. Craig said that there were two separate issues in the proposal. The Tuesday-Thursday classes are already the equivalent of the 50 minute hour. He also said that when courses were changed from 3 to 4 credits, it was stated that in-class and out-of-class work would be appropriate for a 4-credit course. He asked if the University had been true to that spirit. There is no answer to this question. Students take fewer classes per quarter now. He said that because the University is a commuter campus in a large, metropolitan community, it loses students to outside interests. Also, since tuition has gone up, more students need to work. Still, CIA has had a steady enrollment. Because of budget cuts, a decreasing number of faculty and teaching assistants must meet student needs. Circumstances make it harder for faculty and students to make a commitment to outside class work.

Joyce Brady said that the Division of Summer Sessions accepts what the academic departments propose in contact time per credit. This varies from the regular academic year.

Lawrence Goodman said that if the University changes its credits to match class hours, it could cause problems. The students need 180 credits to graduate. There could be a dramatic drop in the number of credit hours.

John Wallace asked if we were really on solid ground when saying that the University has considerably less contact time per credit hour than other universities. Craig said there was less formal contact time when the University moved to 4-credit classes. The spirit of the change was that learning could take place in different circumstances.

Andrew Collins said the data is not terribly solid; it's hard to draw conclusions. The University has said to the state that we are prepared to improve education. Is the 50 minute hour a way to demonstrate this is a move toward higher quality undergraduate education programs? John Wallace said the concern in the Governor's office is on educational outputs. Sheila Corcoran suggested SCEP get data from students and faculty: is 45 minutes enough time? If the class hour were increased to 50 minutes, it would add 2 1/2 hours over the quarter.

Lawrence Goodman suggested staggering the class start times on the East Bank, West Bank, and St. Paul Campuses by 15 minutes. Staggering class times could add to student problems; especially for those who work off campus.

It was suggested that the Graduate School and student groups be consulted next. Ian Maitland asked if the University is really that different from other public universities. Should we conform? Craig suggested that a broader diversity of colleges might show more options from which to choose. Naomi Scheman suggested looking at the equivalency of our courses. Do our credits transfer to other universities? Are they discounted?

Andrew questioned the timing of the issue. Sheila suggested we wait until fall quarter and gather support first.

John Malmberg from Continuing Education and Extension said the 50 minute hour is not a problem since Extension classes already have 50 minute periods. However, if class time per credit hour were increased from 3 to 4 hours, extension classes would increase from 2 hours and 30 minutes to 3 hours and 20 minutes. This could cause a problem. One alternative would be to have classes meet twice a week. He also said the shift from a quarter schedule to a semester schedule is not popular with extension students.

This issue will be discussed again on April 30.