

CLASSROOM ADVISORY SUBCOMMITTEE  
MINUTES OF MEETING

December 6, 2010

Morrill Hall Room 300

[In these minutes: winter closure; weekend event support – focused eight buildings; committee business]

[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.]

PRESENT: Susan Wick (Chair), Gordon Duke, John Comazzi, Michael Hannon, Patricia Schaber, Jed Overmann, Jeremy Todd, Jeff Lindgren, Melissa Cathcart, Linda Jorn, Michael Garza,

REGRETS: Keya Ganguly, Kevin Smith, Roberta Juarez

ABSENT: Emily Bramschreiber, Mary Hable

OTHERS ATTENDING: David Crane, Classrooms Facilities Coordination Manager

Professor Susan Wick called the meeting to order and welcomed those present. She asked the committee members to introduce themselves.

**Winter Closure**

Jeremy Todd, Interim Director of the Office of Classroom Management (OCM), discussed the impact of the University's winter closure on OCM. He reminded the Classroom Advisory Subcommittee (CAS) that the University of Minnesota Twin Cities campus would be closed between December 24, 2010 and January 2, 2011 and provided the committee with the University Winter Closure website ([www1.umn.edu/twincities/faculty-staff/closure/](http://www1.umn.edu/twincities/faculty-staff/closure/)). He also provided a handout regarding winter closure questions and answers. He pointed out the differences in the coordinate campus closure dates. The Duluth campus is closed from December 23, 2010 to January 3, 2011 and the Morris and Crookston campuses are closed from December 23, 2010 to January 2, 2011. He also discussed building accessibility. Mr. Todd stated that the temperature of unoccupied buildings would drop five to ten degrees and access to buildings would be via key or keycard. He further stated that no classes would be meeting during winter closure and the classrooms would be closed after 4:30 on December 23, 2010. He went on to state that the furlough would impact classroom technical services. Because the staff would be unable to work, they could only accomplish about half of the updates or installations that would typically be made over winter break. OCM's main project over the winter break would be renewal of the Molecular Cellular Biology Building. Mr. Todd stated that it was due for an upgrade last summer but work was deferred to winter break for financial reasons. There would also

be some smaller updates and conversions of classrooms including three classrooms in Cooke Hall.

Professor Wick asked if there had been any “push back” regarding the winter closure. Mr. Todd stated that the winter closure period is generally a period of reduced activity and he had not received any external complaints. The main issue has been reduced access to buildings and how that would be managed.

### **Weekend Event Support and Focused Eight Buildings –**

Mr. Todd introduced Mike Garza, Facilities Management Representative and David Crane, Classrooms Facilities Coordination Manager. Mr. Crane provided CAS with a handout from the Facilities Management web site regarding weekend standards and custodial rates. ([www.facm.umn.edu/customers/weekend-usage-standards/faq](http://www.facm.umn.edu/customers/weekend-usage-standards/faq)). He stated the past practice regarding classrooms and event requests was to have all buildings and rooms open on weekends. Weekends were defined as Saturdays from 8:00 to 1:00. Mr. Crane stated that Game Day Saturday Event Support and an Energy Conservation Operations Team project prompted a redefinition of the Saturday presence.

The Saturday event history was reviewed, and it was determined that with a few exceptions the requested events did not fill the inventory of available buildings. The inventory could be paired down to eight to ten buildings and still cover the Saturday event activity if the hours were extended from 8:00 to 4:00. The building closures would also provide energy savings to the University. The “focused eight” buildings were selected from the East Bank, West Bank and St. Paul. It was recognized that some of the buildings would not meet programmatic needs and exceptions would be required.

Since September 1, the University has operated with the reduced building set, and it seems to be working well. Mr. Crane stated that OCM would continue to evaluate the Saturday inventory. Mr. Garza commented that there would be some additions to the inventory of buildings available on Saturday. In particular, Willey Hall is typically used on weekends so FM West Bank staff conduct unlocks, cleanups, and locks for this building as well. Mr. Garza also noted that the custodial schedules had to be adjusted so that there were not so many overtime requests. Mr. Todd stated the closures provide a lot of opportunity. As activity is focused into fewer buildings, OCM can better understand the University’s needs, build relationships with repeat event requesters, improve service in the buildings that remain open, improve security, and improve investment in the lifecycle of fixtures in the buildings.

Mr. Garza stated the one area of concern has been the increased custodial fees. He explained that the custodial fees for events held in classrooms had not changed since 2002, but since that time there were a number of contract fees that necessitated a rise in the custodial fee. He noted, however, that a waiver or exception to the fee is available. Brad Hoff, FM Chief Administration Officer, is the point of contact for addressing the waivers.

Mr. Todd asked for feedback on the focused eight closures. Professor Wick commented that she appreciates that exceptions can be made for Saturday scheduling needs. Mr. Crane responded that OCM is trying to find the balance between weekend needs and efficiency, and hopes that the need for fees incurred for opening buildings not on the focused eight list would eventually be reduced.

He noted that OCM recently engaged in a program with Facilities Management to map out the large fan systems and the areas they served. So the fans could be shut down when classrooms were not in use. He hoped that the support for this would be institutionalized. Professor Patricia Schaber noted that last weekend the heat was on for a continuing education conference and asked about the procedure for heating rooms on weekends. Mr. Crane responded that based on the event schedule, OCM forwards a list to FM and FM reprograms the fan system for particular events. FM is working on ways to automate this process. Professor Schaber also asked about the use of space heaters, and Mr. Garza responded that space heaters are not endorsed due to safety and energy efficiency issues.

Mr. Crane stated that OCM had recently acquired an inventory of study spaces, and is examining how the study space that is integrated with the focused eight buildings is used on weekends. Professor Wick commented that the STSS building is used as student study space on weekends.

Mr. Todd next asked CAS for feedback on the need for building access during study days. He stated study days typically occur on a Sunday and all academic buildings supporting classrooms are open for random access on those days. But OCM is considering whether this is still a necessary function or if it should be refined.

Professor Schaber stated she seldom sees students on campus during weekends. Professor Gordon Duke commented that the Carlson School of Management's small-break-out rooms are well used for study space but the classrooms are not. Mr. Crane stated that OCM would like to identify the buildings that are already open and use them as study spaces before opening other spaces. Professor Jeffrey Lindgren asked if staff could identify which buildings are in use and then make a call to OCM, or if FM currently has staff available who could do a site review of the activity. Mr. Garza commented that no staff are currently available to do this type of survey.

Professor John Comazzi asked how OCM handles the landscape architecture building. He noted that it is always open and it would make sense to use it as a study space. Professor Comazzi also asked how studio spaces are handled. Mr. Crane noted that the studios are not assigned to OCM. Mr. Garza responded that Greg Williams, FM Operations Supervisor, addresses requests for studio use. Mr. Crane stated that a typical response for a college or department that wants access to a building on weekends is to make arrangements with FM for card access or to open the building.

A committee member asked if the weekend activity closures influence both heat and lights. Mr. Todd responded that it impacts heat, lights, and fan schedules for those buildings with a centralized system. But he noted that those buildings with radiant heat

are continually heated. Mr. Crane noted that the Carlson Building has a fan schedule and heat by occupancy sensor. Professor Gordon indicated that this seems to be working well.

Mr. Todd asked for committee feedback on the possibility of 24/7 building access. He noted that historically there did not seem to be much demand. Professor Wick noted she was loath to make a recommendation without student input. Mr. Todd stated OCM partnered with first year programs to survey students about their study activities, but this did not provide much feedback, as the students were new. Mr. Todd stated he was also interested in information from a faculty perspective on the need for 24/7 access for events or study sessions.

A committee member asked if there were any plans for 24/7 class offerings to assist students with completion and to accommodate student schedules. Mr. Todd noted that there are institutions starting classes at 2:00 a.m, but he was not aware of any initiatives for this at the University of Minnesota.

Professor Comazzi asked if there was a fee structure for using classrooms for outside activities such as events and on-going conferences. Mr. Todd responded that there is a fee schedule and it corresponds to the maintenance and custodial upkeep after the event. Mr. Crane noted that Conference and Event Services continues to operate and identify larger events and coordinates them on an individual basis.

Returning to the issue of student needs for building access, Professor Wick stated she is a Director of Undergraduate Studies and offered to send a message to biology majors asking about their building use. Mr. Crane stated students should send their responses to him.

### **Old Business**

Resolution on Classroom Needs Assessment - Professor Wick reported to the committee that she presented its *Resolution on the Classroom Needs Assessment* to the University Senate on December 2. She explained that the resolution requested the administration to report to CAS on proposals for classroom number, capacity and pedagogical accommodations for every planned new building or major renovation and the impact of these proposals on the central classroom inventory. She stated that the resolution passed with no discussion. Professor Wick then asked Mr. Todd if there were buildings he knew would be taken off-line. Mr. Todd stated that University Services is looking at removing 1000 square feet of space, and that there are some classroom buildings and capital projects on this list. But the question is when this will occur. For instance, OCM was planning for Folwell Hall to go off-line in Spring 2011, but it was taken off in Fall 2010. Mr. Todd noted that going forward it would be helpful for OCM to know ten months to a year in advance about capital projects in order to place course sections.

Professor Wick informed the committee that the resolution requires it to report annually to the Senate Committee on Educational Policy and the Senate Committee on Finance

and Planning on classroom proposals that are made and the adequacy of plans for providing for classroom space.

Melissa Cathcart expressed concern about courses that are listed on the schedule, but then are not actually offered. Mr. Todd responded that feedback like that provided by Ms. Cathcart is shared with course schedulers working on behalf of a department and that it is also shared with Associate Deans and a general message about scheduling is provided to departments and colleges, but it is ultimately up to departments and colleges whether a course section is actually offered. Ms. Cathcart also mentioned that some courses show up as offered and then are immediately listed as closed. Professor Schaber suggested that this might mean the course is closed to students outside the cohort or program and they need prior permission to enter.

Draft Statement on OCM Funding – Professor Wick asked for committee discussion and comment on the draft *Statement on Funding as a Percentage of Lifecycle Requirements for Classroom Facilities and Technologies*.<sup>1</sup> This statement was drafted to express

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**<sup>1</sup> STATEMENT ON FUNDING AS A PERCENTAGE OF LIFECYCLE REQUIREMENTS FOR CLASSROOM FACILITIES AND TECHNOLOGIES**

The Classroom Advisory Subcommittee (CAS) recommends retaining funding for the Office of Classroom Management (OCM) at the level of approximately 50% of lifecycle requirement to allow a minimum level of renewal of classroom facilities and technologies. CAS further recommends eventually restoring funding to 80% of need in order to provide a quality standard for classroom facilities, technology, and support that is appropriate for a major, nationally ranked university.

The Classroom Advisory Subcommittee expresses alarm that the recurring allocation to OCM for FY 2011 will meet only 42% of facility and technology lifecycle needs. The projected allocation for FY 2012 is only 40% of lifecycle needs. At such low levels, faculty and students will be required to endure facilities and technologies that are substantially beyond their planned lifespan, and whose failure will result in degradation of the learning experience. The University of Minnesota invested in technology, but without maintenance and renewal, at some point this technology will be inaccessible due to equipment failure.

**COMMENT:**

OCM Interim Director, Jeremy Todd, presented a study of OCM funding history and FY2011 projections to the Classroom Advisory Subcommittee in April 2010, and updated this information in December 2010. The study summarized the change in recurring allocations to OCM from FY 2004 to FY 2010 with projections for FY 2011. Funding as a percentage of lifecycle requirement for classroom facilities and technologies peaked in FY 2008 at almost 79% of lifecycle requirement, but subsequently dropped over the next two years to 48% of lifecycle requirement in FY 2010. In 2011 there will be a further reduction to 42% and the projected allocation for FY 2012 is 40% of facility and technology lifecycle needs.

support for funding for OCM at or above 2010 levels. It was in response to the study of OCM's funding history and FY2011 projections presented by Mr. Todd to CAS in April 2010, and updated in December 2010 to reflect 2012 projections. Mr. Todd explained that the projected allocation to OCM for FY 2012 only meets 40% of lifecycle needs. There has been an increase in rooms and technology since 2010, so funding must be increased to meet at 50% lifecycle request. Today OCM is at 42% of funding of lifecycle needs for facilities and technology. So, OCM must make funding choices. For example, the renewal of the Molecular Cellular Biology Building was deferred from the last summer to winter break, and there are fifty other buildings on renewal deferral.

Mr. Todd stated that on average a four-year renewal cycle is required, but high use rooms need renewal every three years. If funding continues to erode or does not keep pace with the addition of rooms, OCM must make decisions about delaying facilities and technology maintenance that would impact the functionality of classrooms.

Mr. Todd went on to state that 2010 is a benchmark. Renewal at 50% of need allows for maintenance but does not provide opportunities for innovation. To maintain a high level of support requires funding to lifecycle level. Professor Wick commented that after a few years at the present funding level, classrooms and technology really would not be functional. Mr. Todd responded that this would create a situation where faculty and instructors would likely be on edge because they do not have reliable facilities and technology.

Professor Lindgren suggested adding some language to the statement that brings to life the impact of inadequate funding. Professor Wick suggested that the student facilities satisfaction report card could be used. Mr. Todd stated that this is the first time the OCM budget has been correlated to the baseline lifecycle needs. In FY 2009 OCM received a

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Mr. Todd projected that 60% of the FY 2011 recurring allocation to OCM would be utilized to address salaries, minimum levels of required technology maintenance and minimum levels of required facility maintenance. The remaining 40% of the recurring allocation could be utilized to fund Technology Renewal at 50% of need, or 50% of Facility Renewal at 50% of need, or a combination of technology and facility renewal, but at substantially less than 50% of need. The CAS believes that timely technology and facility renewal is essential to a quality teaching and learning experience, and therefore, asks the University Senate to encourage retention of the OCM's funding at or above 2010 percentage levels – 50% of lifecycle requirement.

Submitted by:

Susan Wick, Chair

Classroom Advisory Subcommittee

Approved by the Classroom Advisory Subcommittee on \_\_\_\_\_, 2010.

42% budget cut. It has been creative in responding to this by deferring, partnering, delaying renewal, and reusing. Professor Schaber suggested using graphics to show the drop in funding. Michael Hannon asked if it was possible to get information from other institutions about how they spend on classroom facilities and technology. Mr. Todd explained that other institutions are often supported differently. They may for instance, be led by information technology departments, registrars offices, or facilities. There are no easy apples-to-apples comparisons because OCM is uniquely structured. But Mr. Todd noted that the last comparative review of classrooms was conducted in 2008, and acknowledged that perhaps it is time to do this again.

Professor Jeffrey Lindgren volunteered to work with Mr. Todd to enhance the statement on OCM funding. It was agreed that they would bring the revised statement to the February 7 CAS meeting.

Hearing no further business, Professor Wick adjourned the meeting.

Dawn Zugay  
University Senate Office