

Student Senate Consultative Committee (SSCC)
November 22, 2019
Minutes of the Meeting

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 reflect the views of, nor are they binding on, the senate, the administration, or the Board of Regents.

[In these minutes: SSCC Member Updates; Discussion on Sustainability Initiatives; Non-Resident, Non-Reciprocity Tuition Discussion; Student Senate Nominating Subcommittee Vacancy Discussion; Student Committee on Committees Election; 2020-2021 Student Senate Seat Allocation; Discussion of Liberal Education Requirements]

PRESENT: Amy Ma (chair), Ryan Machtmes (vice chair), Isaiah Ogren (ranking student senator), Madison Anderson, Briggs Tople, Josh Lesser, Sam Shepherd, Josh Westfield, Nathan Carlson, Rachel Kieffer, Paul Hendrickx (proxy for Singh)

REGRETS: Manpreet Singh

ABSENT: Otto Johnson

GUESTS: Megan Connor, sustainability committee director, Minnesota Student Association; Bob McMaster, vice provost, Office of Undergraduate Education; Kelly Wallin, former COGS representative to the SSCC

OTHERS: Megan Sweet

Chair Amy Ma welcomed the committee, and members introduced themselves.

1. SSCC Member Updates - Ma asked each SSCC member to provide an update from their respective group and the responses were as follows:

- Isaiah Ogren, ranking student senator, stated that at the next meeting of the University Senate, the faculty will be holding a vote to possibly update the University's liberal education requirements. He stated that he and other student senators are frustrated that the Student Senate will have no vote on the issue and he and others are drafting a letter to be submitted to the full University Senate. Additionally, there are concerns over the new security measures implemented at the health sciences buildings and Ogren is thinking about sending a potential letter to particular deans and administrators.
- Ryan Machtmes, vice chair, said that he too is concerned about the security in the health sciences buildings, especially regarding accessibility issues. He is working with some other stakeholders on a resolution regarding sexual misconduct as well.
- Nathan Carlson from the Rochester Student Association (RSA) stated that RSA is revising its constitution and bylaws in order to promote more flexibility and accountability for its members.

- Josh Westfield said that the Morris Campus Student Association (MCSA) is working on two resolutions related to affordable and sustainable courses and campus inclusivity. Additionally, the candidates for the position of vice chancellor for academic affairs and dean are visiting the campus.
- Sam Shepherd stated that the University of Minnesota Duluth Student Association (UMDSA) held a town hall meeting on Monday. UMD has recently been dealing with a budget shortfall and there have been a few articles and letters circulating in response to the issue. UMDSA has also been working on a teaching evaluation task force.
- Josh Lesser said that the Professional Student Government (PSG) recently announced new leadership with Andrew Durkot taking over as president. They have been meeting biweekly to field several grant requests. PSG is also looking at ways to increase representation of graduate schools on various committees as well as changing some eligibility requirements for student health care.
- Briggs Tople said that the Minnesota Student Association (MSA) is also discussing building security at the health sciences buildings. They recently had their “Cookies with Constituents” event to allow students to meet with their legislative representatives. MSA is also working on multiple resolutions regarding inclusionary zoning, Higher Education Act authorization, and expanding the Campus Zone light rail pass. MSA’s Campus Life Committee is looking to work on student workers minimum wage on campus and will possibly be looking for a letter of support from the Student Senate. Finally, MSA is looking at redefining requirements for student senators that work with MSA and how they meet with constituents.
- Madison Anderson said that the Council of Graduate Students (COGS) will have a busy general assembly meeting in December where they hope to discuss changes to the University policy on Student Employment, emphasizing practices for hiring graduate workers. COGS recently launched a graduate student helpline for students to voice concerns to COGS. COGS leadership has also been meeting with key stakeholders regarding sexual misconduct policies.
- Paul Hendrickx stated that the the Crookston Student Association (CSA) is looking at addressing some of the new changes to the Crookston class registration policy. Crookston recently introduced a new policy in which students who are athletes will get preference to register their classes over non-athlete students for the spring semester. A meeting has been scheduled for December 9th for students to raise concerns and ask questions of the vice chancellor.
- Rachel Kieffer said that the Senate Committee on Student Affairs (SCSA) recently heard from Bri Keeney from the Office of the President regarding systemwide strategic planning and Maggie Towle, interim vice provost for Student Affairs, regarding an update on initiatives on the Twin Cities campus.
- Ma stated that she too has been working with President Joan T.A. Gabel on systemwide strategic planning. She has had further discussions with Boynton Health on student food and housing insecurity and dining and looking into ways to better impart messaging on these struggles to elected officials. Finally, there is ongoing discussions about the next steps regarding institutional history and the forum held on the issue about two weeks ago on the Twin Cities campus. If this is an issue to be addressed on other campuses, Ma wants to make sure those students have information and resources.

2. Discussion on Sustainability Initiatives - Ma introduced Megan Connor, sustainability committee director, MSA, to present information regarding the work they have been doing around environmental justice. Connor stated that environmental justice (EJ) is defined by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. MSA has long felt that the University has had a lack of EJ curriculum with only five classes offered on the topic. Students in fields related to EJ are not required to take a course on the subject and students wanting to engage in a class-load surrounding EJ and collective action do not currently have the opportunity on campus.

Connor continued by stating that MSA passed a resolution this passed April regarding EJ calling for the administration to increase EJ-themed courses across disciplines and courses. It also calls on collegiate leadership, including department heads, collegiate deans, and curriculum committees to add a required EJ component to existing environmental and other related majors. MSA wants to encourage the University to facilitate engagement with community leaders of EJ organizations to foster community-engaged learning and expose students to the issues that impact the community in which they are living.

Westfield commended Connor and MSA for their work on this issue and asked for access to the resolution to bring to the MCSA. Anderson asked if Connor has consulted with the Department of American Indian and Chicano Studies to possibly co-sponsor the resolution. Connor said that she plans to do that if possible.

Connor then presented information regarding the re-evaluation of the Climate Action Plan in conjunction with PSG. The re-evaluation is a two-page report which states the wants and concerns of students in taking on aggressive changes to mitigate our impact on climate change, such as reaching the carbon-neutral goal by 2050, creating a future sustainable investment policy, and incorporating environmental justice language into the plan. The plan was meant to be a 10-year plan and it is a good time to reassess the plan since the University is already doing its systemwide strategic planning.

3. Non-Resident, Non-Reciprocity Tuition Discussion - Ma introduced Bob McMaster, vice provost, Office of Undergraduate Education, to have a discussion regarding the trends of non-resident, non-reciprocity (NRNR) tuition at the University. Ogren started the conversation by stating that he has expressed his concerns to several stakeholders that there is a perception that the Board of Regents simply uses NRNR tuition as a “blank check” to address budget issues and the process of determining these rates is not very transparent.

McMaster then described the decision making process for undergraduate NRNR tuition. He stated that all forms of tuition are set by the senior vice president for finance and operations,

Brian Burnett. This is done in conjunction with the president, and the Board of Regents who usually set the rates in June of each year after receiving recommendations in May. Historically, McMaster said that there used to be a significant differential between resident and non-resident tuition, up to twice the price for non-residents. In 2005-06, the University renegotiated its reciprocity agreement with the state of Wisconsin in order to bring in more money from Wisconsin students attending the University. With that extra funding, the decision was made to buy down NRNR tuition. This allowed the University to extend its reach from regionally to a more national and international approach for recruiting students. In 2006-07, the University implemented the "R-\$4000" rate which meant that non-resident students would pay the resident rate plus an additional \$4,000, which was very inexpensive for non-residence in McMaster's opinion. That rate stayed in place for about four to five years.

McMaster continued by stating that in 2011, many legislators as well as a few regents felt that residents were subsidizing non-resident tuition. With nationwide recruiting pipelines now in place, NRNR tuition began to rise in 2016, moving closer to the middle of the road when compared to the other Big Ten universities. Stakeholders in finance and operations are always looking at what is feasible for students when raising tuition on an annual basis. Students who are continuing would never have more than a 5.5% increase year over year. Currently, NRNR tuition stands at about \$33,534 annually. Ogren asked who is above and below the University when compared to other Big Ten schools. McMaster replied that Penn State is immediately above at \$35,514 and Illinois is immediately below at \$33,352.

McMaster further indicated that budget stakeholders are looking to have a faster timeline for tuition decisions so students have more information sooner for the following year. McMaster said that the Office of Undergraduate Education does not view increasing the tuition of NRNR students to get more money, it is to diversify the student body. The same theory goes for international students.

Ogren asked if the number of NRNR students has decreased after the previous two tuition increases. McMaster replied that there was an impact of a decrease of students enrolling from 979 to 726 after a 15% tuition increase. He said the target for enrollment is 800-850 students. Ogren then asked what percentage of students does the Board of Regents want to see as NRNR. McMaster said that they have a relative baseline goal of 65% residents, 15% non-resident reciprocity, 15% NRNR, and 5% international students for each class.

Ogren asked if the University's land grant mission impacts the rate and number of NRNR and international students enrolling compared to Wisconsin or Michigan. McMaster said that the University typically brings in a freshman class of about 6,100 students because that is the capacity at which the University can adequately support them. The University currently wants to remain at that 65% enrollment for residents and is required to remain at the 15% reciprocity enrollees, which gives little room for straying from the 15% NRNR enrollment.

Machtmes asked how NRNR tuition affects graduate education? McMaster said that he only deals with undergraduate education. Graduate student funding usually comes from other sources such as research grants that help waive tuition.

4. 2020-2021 Student Senate Seat Allocation - Ma introduced Kelly Wallin, former COGS representative to the SSCC, and Chris Kwapick, senate associate, University Senate Office, to explain the process for the Student Senate seat allocation for the 2020-21 school year. Kwapick explained that according to the Student Senate bylaws, “(senate seats) shall be distributed among the colleges and campuses in proportion to the number of students in those units. Each college shall be guaranteed one student senator. Morris and Crookston will be guaranteed a minimum of two student senators. Twin Cities colleges with one seat may be filled by an undergraduate, graduate, or professional student in that college. Twin Cities colleges with more than one seat will allocate seats according to the distribution of undergraduate and graduate/professional students in the college. Senate seat distribution will be presented to the Student Consultative Committee each year before the start of elections. Any modifications to the election process must be approved before the start of the annual election process.”

Kwapick further stated that in past years, the allocation calculations used a more basic system of division. Last year, former vice chair, Aleksander Holleran, and COGS representative, Wallin, suggested using a better method for a more accurate allocation. Wallin explained that she used the same process that the United States House of Representatives uses when allocating seats to each state after every census. She explained that there would be [two changes](#) in allocation where the College of Liberal Arts and the UMD College of Science and Engineering would each lose one seat and the Medical School and UMD College of Education and Human Services Programs would each gain a seat. Kwapick stated that he included suggested further appropriations to undergraduate and graduate students within each college where applicable.

Ogren moved to approve the [2020-21 Student Senate Seat Allocation](#). The motion was seconded by Tople. The motion prevailed.

5. Student Senate Nominating Subcommittee Vacancy Discussion - Ma stated that with the resignation of Austin Berger from the SSCC, it left a vacancy on the Student Senate Nominating Subcommittee which will need to be filled by a Student Senator at the next meeting of the Student Senate.

6. Student Committee on Committees Election - Ma stated that with the resignation of Austin Berger from the SSCC, it left a vacancy on the Student Committees on Committees to be filled by a SSCC member. Ma opened the floor to nominations for the position and Ogren nominated Ma for the position. There were no further nominations and nominations were closed. Ma was elected to serve on the Student Committee on Committees for the remainder of the 2019-20 term.

7. Discussion of Liberal Education requirements - Ma again noted that many students had concerns over the upcoming vote on possibly changing the liberal education requirements at the Twin Cities campus. She said that she and others were drafting a [letter](#) and encouraged members to edit and sign on to it. Tople stated he was frustrated that the item is being placed on the

December agenda and not waiting until the spring. Ogren expressed his consternation that students have little say on the issue and both proposals are problematic. Machtmes asked if anyone knew how much of a role President Gabel has in the development of these proposals. Ogren said he thought it to be quite minimal as the faculty are the ones who control the curriculum and the discussion has been going on for three years. Tople said that MSA members are very concerned about this and may lend their support to opposing any changes. Ma said that further discussion will be had via email between today and the University Senate meeting next week.

Hearing no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Chris Kwapick
University Senate Office