
The University Senate

FACULTY · STUDENT · P&A · CIVIL SERVICE

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Senate Consultative Committee April 15, 2024 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: Workforce Reinvestment Resolution Response]

PRESENT: Mark Bee (chair), Abraham Ayebo, David Brown, Liz Davis, Colleen Flaherty Manchester, Jennifer Goodnough (vice chair), Sharon Jansa, Perry Leo, Monica Luciana, Stacy Maher, Katherine Scheil, Rachna Shah, Pete Smith, Subree Subramanian, Whitney Taha Frakes, Matthew Verkuilen

REGRETS: Kit Breshears, David Stenehjem

ABSENT: Natalie Bennett, Pavan Guttipatti, Ethan Ion, Tania Mitchell, Madeline Schneider, Paisley Sierra

OTHERS: Maggie Flaten, advisor for strategy and initiatives, Office of the President; Jaclyn Adair, senate associate and assistant to the director; Deena Barker, senate associate; John Lof, senate associate; Geaneete Poole, senate associate; and Erin Heath, director, University Senate Office

1. Workforce Reinvestment Resolution Response

Professor Mark Bee, chair, called the meeting to order and explained that the meeting would consist of breakout rooms to discuss the Workforce Reinvestment Resolution Response, and then a report-out at the end.

Breakout Session 1

Prompt 1: What task force recommendations struck you as “reinvestments” in the workforce (e.g., something to be hopeful about or that you were excited to see)?

Answers:

- Off-the-table was limited.
- P&A employees will really benefit from:
 - Make career ladders and advancement opportunities accessible to all employees and include regular assessment of career advancement patterns from an equity perspective. (Principle 3; Priority 4)

- Encourage the use of multi-year contracts for contingent and term faculty. (Principle 2; Priority 2)
- Revise job descriptions to include on-site, off-site, and hybrid. (Principle 2; Priority 5a)
- Create guidelines for on-site, off-site, and hybrid work (Principle 2; Priority 5b)
- Establish criteria for fully remote work (Principle 2; Priority 5c)
- Establish a system-wide minimum per-credit-hour payment for courses for all employees teaching on a per-credit basis. (Principle 1; Priority 3)
- The revisions to the Regents' Scholarship Program was well done
- Compensation recognized as a problem
- Mixed feelings on the dependent tuition benefit. There is an opportunity there that we could leverage in recruitment.

Prompt 2: What pieces struck you the administration coming up short in its response (e.g., something you were disappointed was missing)?

Answers:

- Concerned about how “Eliminate discrepancies in pay and benefits between civil service and labor-represented employees” will be implemented, because sometimes certain disciplines and market conditions will determine higher pay.
- If there isn't actually money upfront, it's not really an investment - therefore doesn't feel like a reinvestment
- Burnout committee missed classroom and administrative work (i.e. Chrome River).
- The service award is great, but it misses staff.
- Cost of Living percent raises are inequitable; there should be more exploration about how to raise salaries in an equitable way
- Tuition benefit pulled off table.
- Job classification issues: P&A is becoming a catchall. More clarity, clear distinctions are needed.
- Graduate student negotiation: boilerplate, noncommittal

Breakout Session 2

Prompt: What are the top three task force recommendations the University Senate should advocate for in the coming year to keep or build momentum?

Answers:

- Departments need to figure out merit guidelines and how it is compensated.
- Burden reduction for all staff and faculty - committee approach felt questionable. Concerned about the focus on research. Missing - Chrome River, DRC, classroom tasks, hiring. Rather than a committee - commitment to listening, broader investigation. Currently MNGen (via OVPR) is being rolled out. And there is little confidence in it. Core curriculum requirements will also create new work, including course proposals that will have to be redone and reapplied.
- COLA back on the table - merit pay doesn't do enough to bring salaries up
- Spousal and dependent benefits - most other institutions have this benefit so it is very disappointing as a new faculty/staff coming here and realizing it's not a benefit.
- Multi-year contracts for contingent and term faculty
- Compensation needs to remain at forefront. Current response consists of piecemeal

reactions rather than philosophical commitment to paying people competitively.

- Multi-year contracts for P&A faculty.
- Consider pathways to advancement that reward work done and don't penalize past preparation (e.g. lack of bachelor's degree).
- For staff: human resources needs to complete market-refinement process. Critical first step in salary adjustment. If includes faculty - needs to define peer group.
- Tuition support for employees and their dependents
- Make real changes to allow faculty/staff to focus on core work (a writing hunker is great, but doesn't solve the problem of service overload)
- Compensation: Cost of Living Adjustment - emphasize that the merit increase INCLUDES everything.
- Tuition benefits for dependents.
- Disparity in service engagements/involvement. Needs to consider different employee categories – given the way different employee groups are paid, there will need to be a better understanding/acknowledgement of how to get different groups involved. Contingent on other things that will need to be fixed before.

Breakout Session 3

Prompt: What are the best ways to keep both University Senate leadership and the administration accountable for carrying out proposed recommendations?

Answers:

- Continuity of institutional memory around the initiative
- Presidential initiative to keep it holistic and continue to shine light on it
- Productive tension
- Board of Regents' (BOR) role and understanding - ongoing education and understanding. How do the BOR get onboarded? Why only student representation at BOR meetings - why not other employee groups?
- Provide data-driven reports (e.g. compensation report provided detail that administration couldn't ignore). Provide a similar report for tuition benefit.
- Circulate compensation report more broadly at unit level - raise awareness at grassroots level. Tie it to the workforce reinvestment resolution.
- Include Workforce Reinvestment as part of the strategic plan.
- Continue regular reports at senate meetings.
- Ask the task force co-chairs to do a report at committee meetings (SCC, and others that seem appropriate) .
- P&A B&C subcommittee continues to be a forum for real collaboration and input for Office of Human Resources (OHR) staff
- Information. data, metrics that provide an update on the progress status of the FY2025 recommendations, FY2026 recommendations at the beginning of the year, end of the year
- Town hall format (SCC, FCC-run) to provide an update to staff/faculty
- Reporting to BOR on progress through fall working lunch, mid and end of year reports
- Meeting with the new incoming president and Senior Vice President of Finance and Operations when seated about the recommendations and progress.

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University Senate Office