

CLASSROOM ADVISORY SUBCOMMITTEE  
MINUTES OF MEETING  
NOVEMBER 5, 2007

[In these minutes: Impact on the Campus when the Science Classroom Building is taken Off-Line to Make Way for the Science Teaching & Student Services Building]

[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: Ken Heller, chair, Jeffrey Hammer, Steve Fitzgerald, Roberta Juarez, Jeffrey Lindgren, Mike Garza, Jay Hatch, Eric Otremba

REGRETS: Caroline Rosen, Thomas Michaels, Lisa Norling, Larren Collins

ABSENT: Bernard Gulachek

OTHERS ATTENDING: David Crane, Office of Classroom Management

I). Professor Heller called the meeting to order.

II). Today's presentation by the Office of Classroom Management (OCM) was preceded by a short student perspective on auditorium learning video on YouTube , which can be found at the following URL: <http://mediatedcultures.net/ksudigg/?p=119> This video was used as a point of departure for today's discussion of the Science Teaching & Student Services (STSS) project.

Next, David Crane from the Office of Classroom Management (OCM) briefly walked members through a presentation by the STSS architectural teams of KPT (Kohn Pederson Fox Associates) and HGA Architects to give members a flavor for the project. Slides depicting the location of the project and pre-design features of the building were shared with members.

According to the pre-design, STSS will house 19 classrooms 6 which will have 117 seats each, 6 with 90 student seats each and 7 with 30 student seats each. The other main occupant of the building will be Student Services.

In response to a question concerning the logistics of teaching in one of the 117 seat rooms Mr. Fitzgerald pointed out that OCM has a variety of different classrooms in its inventory. He added that the discussion continues regarding whether additional rooms of this type should be added to the OCM inventory.

Professor Heller suggested that the focus of today's discussion be on the impact that taking the Science Classroom Building off-line will have on the campus. Mr. Fitzgerald

stated that demolition of the Science Classroom Building will take 1,000 student seats off-line starting in the January 2009 timeframe. The Science Classroom Building has four 238-student seat classrooms, plus two very small classrooms. These student seats will need to be absorbed into the remaining classroom inventory. Mr. Fitzgerald went on to point out that:

1. OCM has 13 auditorium classrooms in its inventory on the Minneapolis campus, which have a capacity of greater than 200 seats.
2. There are 7 additional departmental auditorium classrooms on the Minneapolis campus that have 200 seats or more.
3. In addition to these 20 auditorium classrooms, the AHC has 6 departmental classrooms with a capacity of 200 seats or more.

As part of OCM's analysis on placing courses during the STSS construction, OCM does not expect to have to place any courses in the AHC classrooms. Four courses will need to be placed in some of the 7 departmental classrooms. Several courses will be placed in Anderson Hall, which has additional capacity that can be utilized.

OCM has dealt with finding classrooms for 1,000 student seats on several occasions in the past, e.g. Ford Hall renovation, Murphy Hall renovation. The difference in this situation, however, is that since the University converted from quarters to semesters, OCM has been reducing the number of classrooms in its inventory. With each new capital project, while inventory is being reduced, the quality of classrooms is being improved dramatically. The reduction of the classroom inventory has meant that OCM has had to make sequentially higher use of classrooms in terms of utilization. To demonstrate classroom utilization, Mr. Fitzgerald turned members' attention to the OCM Utilization Dashboard (<http://www.classroom.umn.edu/scheduling/dashboard.asp>). This chart indicates that the University has some additional capacity albeit limited.

Mr. Fitzgerald noted that placing the courses displaced by the STSS construction will definitely be a challenge for the campus. STSS construction will force the campus to:

- Be more efficient in utilizing classrooms.
- Make the campus more aware of the importance of not offering courses at non-standard times.
- Be more accurate in projecting enrollment numbers.

Mr. Heller stated that based on the Utilization Dashboard it appears that 60% - 70% utilization is more or less at capacity when it comes to classroom utilization. He added that other constraints in the system impact this capacity situation. The system has built in inefficiencies. Acknowledging this point, Mr. Fitzgerald noted that in reality the campus has spot shortages rather than an overall shortage of classrooms. Mr. Crane added that the Utilization Dashboard illustrates the need for the campus to adhere to standard course times. Mr. Fitzgerald noted that there is clearly an inverse relationship between flexibility and choice, and maximization and utilization. It is a University policy issue when it comes to the break point between flexibility and optimization.

OCM looked at two possible scenarios for placing displaced courses during STSS construction:

1. Scenario 1 is based on a suggestion put forward to Professor Pignolet and the Provisional Study Committee, which proposed exclusive use by Chemistry of 100 Smith Hall and Chemistry meeting pattern and time adjustments.
2. Scenario 2 proposes the exclusive use of Anderson Hall 210 by Chemistry and Anderson Hall 310 for three Chemistry courses without changing any Chemistry time or day patterns.

OCM concluded that scenario 1, while doable, requires course time and day changes, which would likely create problems for many students enrolled in other programs.

In terms of scenario 2, while being a little less efficient, it is better because it does not require any time and day changes. From OCM's perspective, scenario 2 makes the most sense because it has no impact on students who are taking Chemistry courses as part of their program.

Mr. Fitzgerald noted that there are financial implications for both scenarios that were not factored in as part of the STSS project. These include:

1. A significant financial investment in Smith Hall 100 a couple summers ago in preparation of the STSS project.
2. An investment in Tate Hall to get it ready for Physics to use while the STSS project is underway.
3. An investment in Chemistry demonstration space in Smith Hall 49.
4. Possible investment in Anderson 210 & 310 to make the space workable for Chemistry.

Professor Heller asked what happens to the Anderson Hall courses that will be displaced by Chemistry. Mr. Fitzgerald noted that these courses would ripple through the system. One of the scheduling systems has confirmed that there are homes for the courses displaced out of Anderson Hall.

The committee spent considerable time discussing in detail the need for close coordination and communication between department schedulers and central schedulers in order to find rooms for all courses. The importance of this coordination and communication intensifies as large projects are undertaken taking hundreds of student seats offline. Mr. Fitzgerald stated that the STSS project will have an impact on smaller course registration in terms of when these courses will be offered; however, there will be options available to students. There will be less disruption to courses of 100 or more students because of efforts by OCM to preserve their current course meeting time schedules.

Mr. Fitzgerald stated that as this project moves forward it will be the role of CAS, other Senate committees and the administration to re-examine the 60/40 Rule and Standard/Non-Standard Time Policy and consider stronger enforcement. OCM wants to manage central classrooms in such a way that:

- Minimizes adverse impacts to faculty and students.
- Graduation rates are not increased.

- Valuable resources are not extended on empty classrooms.

Based on today's discussion, Professor Heller stated that he is under the impression that a scenario exists where no courses will have to change their time or day meeting schedule and he asked whether this was correct. Mr. Crane stated that the scenario mentioned today only looked at 100+ student seat capacity courses. He stated that he is aware of only one course (100+ capacity) that may need to change its time or day meeting schedule. This course, however, may not need to change its time or day meeting schedule because a departmental classroom may be found to house this course. OCM still needs to look at the complete picture to see how scheduling shakes out for smaller courses (less than 100 student seat capacity). Mr. Fitzgerald stated that in order to retain a course's current meeting schedule during this project a variable that may change is the location of the classroom. Courses will need to be distributed across the Minneapolis campus (OCM is not looking at moving any Minneapolis courses, however, to the St. Paul campus).

Professor Heller asked if departments will be given the choice between changing a course meeting time or meeting location. Yes, to a degree, stated Mr. Fitzgerald. He added, however, that a limiting factor in this scheduling process will require all departments accurately submit their enrollment numbers. For example, if a department elects to keep its meeting time in favor of changing locations and later changes its mind; it will be very difficult if not impossible to accommodate a request of this nature.

Professor Heller suggested that OCM, as of fall 2008, make the Science Classroom Building as swing space. By doing this, if a problem occurs, OCM will be able to move courses back into Science Classroom Building if necessary. Based on the OCM scenario, if OCM can make this logistically work once the Science Classroom Building has been demolished, it should be able to do it before the building is demolished. Mr. Fitzgerald noted that this is an interesting suggestion that OCM will seriously explore.

In closing, Mr. Fitzgerald emphasized that nowhere in today's discussion is OCM implying that auditorium classrooms should be eliminated. The University currently has a rich inventory of auditorium classrooms, and Mr. Fitzgerald does not anticipate that this will change.

III). Hearing no further business, Professor Heller adjourned the meeting.

Renee Dempsey  
University Senate

