

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
Graduate School

Minutes, Graduate School Executive Committee
Special Meeting of Monday, February 5, 1990
4:00 p.m., Room 303 Johnston Hall

Present: Faculty representatives--Professors Darrell A. Frohrib, Lael Gatewood, John Fraser Hart, David E. Smith, Nicholas Spadaccini, Michael G. Wade; administrative representatives--Deans Mark Brenner, Robert T. Holt (chair), Walter Weyhmann, Kenneth Zimmerman; Duluth representative--Professor James A. Grant; General Research Advisory Committee representative--Professor Thomas J. Bouchard; Graduate School Fellowship Committee representative--Professor Emi Ito; student representatives--Trudy Dunham, Frank Pucci, Anna Tonkovich, Wayne Hayes; special guests--President Nils Hasselmo and Senior Vice President and Provost Leonard Kuhl; staff--Dean John T. Hatten, Andrew J. Hein, Myrna Smith; secretary--Vicki Field

(Executive Committee members convened at 3:45 p.m. to identify issues to be raised with President Hasselmo and Vice President Kuhl. The President and Vice President joined the Committee at 4:05 p.m.)

Executive Committee members introduced themselves to President Hasselmo and Vice President Kuhl. Dean Holt briefly described the Committee's composition, noting that all disciplinary areas of the University are represented among its membership.

Executive Committee members proceeded to identify issues important to graduate education and needs in each of the areas cited. Professor Bouchard, chair of the Graduate School's General Research Advisory Committee (GRAC), spoke to need for increased Graduate School research funds. He has been a member of GRAC for about fifteen years, Professor Bouchard said; the past several years have witnessed a University-wide improvement in the quality of research proposals--a phenomenon that speaks well for institutional efforts to recruit good faculty. But this rise in quality also places greater demands on a funding pool that has not increased accordingly. In addition, there are more and larger requests for matching funds, and for carrying faculty through "transition periods" between grants. The first priority is to use the Graduate School funds as start-up for new faculty and the second, to assist faculty who are between research grants from other sources, Professor Bouchard explained. The Graduate School funds no longer meet the needs of University faculty, he added. To President Hasselmo's question about the size of the Graduate School's research budget, Dean Weyhmann said the total amount currently available to both committees (GRAC and its health sciences counterpart, the Health Sciences Research Advisory Committee) is \$2 million. This fall, the Graduate School received a special allocation of \$250,000 from the University's indirect cost recovery monies to make up a shortfall in the previous year's budget. Also mentioned in the discussion was a significant curtailment in NSF and NIH funding levels and effects on the Graduate School's research budget. President Hasselmo said the University's ranking among the country's top twenty NSF-funded institutions is a "tremendous tribute" to its faculty. The time required to secure such grants detracts from other faculty activities, however, he acknowledged. President Hasselmo cited a need to

increase the percentage of members of underrepresented populations (women, minorities, and disabled individuals) in this funding pool. Professor Bouchard estimated incidentally that productive members of his faculty devote about 15 to 17 percent of their time to writing grant proposals.

Professor Ito, chair of the Graduate School Fellowship Committee, next addressed need for increased Graduate School fellowship funding. She described the fellowship program's three components--first-year Graduate School Fellowships, departmental block grants, and Doctoral Dissertation Fellowships--and explained the purpose of each. Despite a significant increase in the number and quality of applications, the number of awards the Fellowship Committee can make remains unchanged. The Graduate School's fellowship budget is not competitive, Professor Ito stressed, particularly in view of the three- to five-year awards offered by many other institutions. President Hasselmo indicated that the University is considering various sources in order to create a pool of flexible funds for investment in carefully chosen areas. Academic Priorities will in part guide these funding decisions. Large increases in the state appropriation are not likely in the next few years, therefore reallocation will again be necessary, he said. Clearly, the future of the University hinges on the quality of the young scholars it is able to attract, President Hasselmo said. He added that funding of students engaged in graduate study is, in his view, a national crisis that affects all disciplines. Fund-raising may be one solution to the problem, he suggested.

Professor Hart asked if the administration's priority will be to further enhance strong areas or to strengthen weak ones. Vice President Kuhl replied that the President's Initiative for Excellence in Undergraduate Education is one critical target for reallocated funds. Improvements in undergraduate education are needed across the University, he said. Professor Hart agreed that the University's undergraduate component requires strengthening but believed a visible commitment to its graduate and research enterprise is also needed. President Hasselmo recalled the premise of Commitment to Focus, which was to build a strong graduate research institution through that plan. However, the University suffered from misunderstandings about Commitment to Focus, which did not place enough emphasis on undergraduate education. President Hasselmo assured Executive Committee members that resources will continue to be dedicated to graduate education, although in a less "public" way. To Professor Hart's initial question, he stated that the University will maintain excellence as a top priority where excellence already exists and will build it as a second priority where it does not presently exist.

Professor Wade pointed to the integral relationship between graduate and undergraduate education and invited comment. Vice President Kuhl identified increased funds for TA preparation as one way of strengthening this relationship. Ms. Dunham stated that the Council of Graduate Students (COGS) will speak with President Hasselmo on February 6 about graduate education as a "mission" for the University. Graduate students are concerned about a possible shift in resources to undergraduate education and implications for graduate programs, she reported. Also of concern is absence of a visible emphasis on graduate education. Undergraduate and graduate education are

closely linked; excellence in one is not possible without excellence in the other also, Ms. Dunham maintained. She added that graduate students serve as role models for undergraduates. President Hasselmo reasserted the administration's commitment to graduate education.

Dean Hatten next addressed needs and concerns of graduate programs on the Duluth campus. Early in his tenure as Graduate School Dean, Dean Holt appointed a special committee to examine graduate education at UMD, Dean Hatten said. A significant finding of this committee was the importance to faculty vitality of the relatively few graduate programs at Duluth. Currently, UMD faculty have several concerns: Students in "cooperative" graduate programs find that their funding sometimes "falls between the cracks" as the students move from one campus to the other. The faculty perceive this to be a central administrative issue rather than a systems issue, Dean Hatten said. Also, faculty are concerned about long-range plans for UMD as the second major academic institution in the state. President Hasselmo clearly distinguished UMD from any other state institution; UMD, like the University's Twin Cities campus, is a research institution, though not at the Ph.D. level, he said. Research at Duluth should focus on natural strengths, President Hasselmo continued, and limited participation in doctoral programs is important with respect to UMD's research function. Professor Grant mentioned that with Dean Holt's support, cooperative programs between the Twin Cities and Duluth have burgeoned in recent years. Dean Holt added that the number of Twin Cities-based Ph.D. students who have gone to Duluth to conduct research is greater than the number of Duluth-based students who have come to Minneapolis-St. Paul. Adequate funding and close cooperation will be crucial to the success of joint-campus ventures like the Toxicology M.S./Ph.D. degree program now under consideration, Dean Holt added. President Hasselmo noted that a memorandum of agreement inviting exchange arrangements between the two campuses has been drawn up in connection with the undergraduate enrollment targets recently confirmed by the Board of Regents. No enrollment targets have been specified at the graduate level, however, he clarified.

Citing the MSPAN (Minnesota Postsecondary Access and Needs) Project and the newly developed Rochester graduate program, Professor Frohrib elaborated on concerns of Institute of Technology faculty--especially those in the Departments of Computer Science, Electrical Engineering, and Mechanical Engineering--in efforts to meet the needs of area industry. At present, these needs are not being met to the extent necessary, he said, yet the faculty are not able to do more without detracting from other programmatic responsibilities. President Hasselmo spoke briefly to the special character of the Rochester community and to its educational needs. The Statewide Telecommunications Access and Routing System (STARS) may offer some opportunities in this regard, he noted. Professor Gatewood observed that delivery of courses via the STARS network will nevertheless require additional faculty time. President Hasselmo also cited a need to restore some University programs before undertaking new outreach initiatives. With respect to meeting regional educational needs, he likened core and expanding educational opportunities to concentric circles; the University is still fairly close to

the core, he said. Professor Wade mentioned that some out-state institutions have begun to deliver their educational product in the Twin Cities.

Professor Smith next asked how the University should plan to meet the faculty shortage predicted in this decade. President Hasselmo pointed to the McKnight Land Grant Professor program as an excellent means to attract top young faculty. He cited need to recruit faculty in a way that ensures an age distribution, however, and he reiterated need to recruit women and minority faculty. Vice President Kuhl recommended judicious mortgaging of faculty positions. Dean Brenner suggested "stocking the shelves" with post-doctorates. Professor Spadaccini inquired about strategies for retaining faculty--especially those at mid-career--and about the "step system" for salary determination advocated by Vice President Kuhl. Vice President Kuhl contrasted the University's merit-based system for deciding salaries, which he said is not adequately funded, with the method used by the University of California. The California legislature provides cost-of-living increases for all state employees; faculty merit increases are funded separately by the legislature, and the salary structure is clearly defined by "steps." Too much time is spent at Minnesota in salary negotiation, and the system contributes to dissatisfaction among the faculty, Vice President Kuhl thought. As a result, good faculty accept positions elsewhere. He recalled that a special committee chaired by Law School Professor Steve Scallen is looking at ways of improving the salary system here, in connection with the removal of the mandatory retirement age in 1993. A change in Minnesota's present salary system will require a substantial legislative augmentation and should solve many retention problems, Vice President Kuhl concluded. President Hasselmo added that the planned two-percent reallocation effective in fiscal 1990-91 is intended in part to provide a means of addressing salary inequities. The University must clearly account to the legislature for faculty productivity and must better show how activities other than teaching contribute to overall productivity, he stated. To Professor Hart's query about whether the legislature is concerned about faculty accountability, President Hasselmo replied that some concern has been expressed. Abolishment of tenure is most often suggested to improve accountability; however, he emphasizes the importance of tenure to guarantee academic freedom, President Hasselmo said. Professor Bouchard recommended that a record of faculty members' activities be made public. President Hasselmo observed that such a change would need to come about through the faculty governance system. It is in the faculty's best interests to be open about its productivity and activities, he asserted.

President Hasselmo and Vice President Kuhl thanked Executive Committee members for the opportunity to meet with them, and members also extended thanks to the President and Vice President for their participation. The meeting was adjourned at 5:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Vicki Field, Assistant to the Dean