

Minutes\*

**Senate Committee on Faculty Affairs  
Thursday, October 24, 1991  
3:15 p.m.  
238 Morrill Hall**

Present: Avner Ben-Ner (chair), Carl Adams, Carol Carrier, Mary Dempsey, Daniel Feeney, Richard Goldstein, Morris Kleiner, Bernard Selzler, George Seltzer, W. Donald Spring, Michael Wade

Guests: Robert Fahnhorst (Employee Benefits), Gerritt Weber (*Minnesota Daily*)

**MINUTES**

The September 26 and October 10, 1991 minutes were approved.

**CHAIR'S REPORT**

Professor Ben-Ner said he had received numerous phone calls from U of M employees upset by the new State rule defining "eligible dependent spouse" for coverage under the State health insurance plans. According to the new definition, a spouse will no longer be considered an eligible dependent under the State health insurance plans if he/she works for an employer with 100 or more employees and elects to receive cash or credit in place of medical insurance, or in exchange for a medical plan with a deduction of \$750 or more. This rule has the potential to adversely affect a large number of U of M employees.

Mr. Fahnhorst emphasized that the U of M had no authority in the decision and, in fact, voiced opposition to it. The rule was drafted by the State's Joint Labor Management Committee and was intended to prevent the State from assuming additional health risks as spouses elect out of their own health plans and then want to be covered under a State plan.

Mr. Fahnhorst suggested that concerned employees send their comments in writing to Ms. Diane Mulvihill, Employee Benefits, and she in turn will forward them on to the State.

Mr. Fahnhorst also said the State is requiring all employees of the U of M and State of Minnesota who have dependent coverage, whether they have a spouse or not, to fill out a "Dependent Eligibility Verification" form. Forms were sent to all employees in their health benefits packet. Employee Benefits must then provide information to the State and carriers on the individuals. The State can deny coverage to a spouse if the form is not completed.

SCFA strongly suggested to Mr. Fahnhorst that Employee Benefits provide additional follow-up on this issue as many employees do not seem to be aware of the importance of the form. Mr. Fahnhorst said employees who do not return the form will be contacted. He also agreed to keep SCFA apprised of

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developments in this issue.

### **RECEIVERSHIP OF DEPARTMENTS**

Professor Ben-Ner said the Senate Consultative Committee had asked SCFA to consider recommending procedures for placing departments in receivership without violating the rights of faculty in tenure and educational policy matters. SCFA's Tenure Subcommittee reviewed the issue and its chair, Professor Dempsey, presented its report.

She said a number of faculty and administrators who had had experience with receivership or tenure regulation issues were contacted for their opinions. The committee concluded that a policy should be developed but within the framework of the current tenure regulations.

Professor Dempsey said receivership of a department usually results when the department chair can no longer effectively administer the department. When that happens, an interim chair (or chairs) is appointed from outside the department to assume leadership and return the department to normalcy.

Taking into consideration the responses they received, the Tenure Subcommittee proposed the following:

Placing a department in "receivership" is the responsibility of the Dean of the college. Before taking actions such as removal of the department chair and appointment of a new chair, the dean should consult extensively with the Faculty Consultative Committee, the Consultative Committee of the college, and the Provost (Academic Vice President). Approval of the Provost should be required for appointment of the new chair and, if necessary, outside faculty to the department. These appointees should have full voting rights, but their terms should be limited to one or, at the most, two years. The present Tenure Regulations (Supplementary Policies) permit these actions with approval of the Provost.

The policy would not change the appointment process for permanent department chairs.

A number of questions were raised by SCFA members relating to the definition of "receivership," and the circumstances under which the normal procedures of appointment to tenure should be suspended.

SCFA agreed that the responsibility for placing a department in receivership should rest with the dean and that extensive consultation should take place. In addition, they recommended the policy emphasize the conditions under which receivership would occur, that alternative language for the term "receivership" be used, and that it be clarified that the chair appointment is temporary and for a limited period of time.

Professor Dempsey will modify the recommendations for SCFA's review, after which it will be forwarded to the Vice President for Academic Affairs with the recommendation that it be included in college constitutions.

### **OMBUDS COMMITTEE REPORT**

Professor Wade reported that his subcommittee will meet with Professor Charlotte Striebel on

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November 11 and present a report to SCFA on November 14. He also agreed to represent SCFA at the October 31 Senate meeting when the Ombuds Report comes up for discussion.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:35 p.m.

Martha Kvanbeck

University of Minnesota