

SENATE COMMITTEE ON STUDENT AFFAIRS
MINUTES OF MEETING
FEBRUARY 4, 2004

[In these minutes: Approval of December 3, 2003 Minutes, Motion for a Periodic Review of the Student Conduct Code, Student Housing, Student Services Fee Subcommittee, Call for a SCSA Chair for 2004 2005]

[These minutes reflect discussion and debate at a meeting of a committee of the University Senate or Twin Cities Assembly; none of the comments, conclusions, or actions reported in these minutes represent the view of, nor are they binding on the Senate or Assembly, the Administration, or the Board of Regents.]

PRESENT: Adam VanWagner, chair, David Lenander, Gerald Rinehart, Iraj Bashiri, Jean-Marie Del-Santo, Janet Schottel, Erin Albrecht, Emily Brown, Shawn Lavelle, Ryan Osero, Matt Painschab

REGRETS: Cheryl Meyers, Kim Roufs, Nathan Hilfiker, Divya Raman, Gabriele Schmiegel

ABSENT: Yasemin Kaygisiz, Nathan Saete

OTHER(S): Tina Falkner, Kendre Turonie

I). Adam VanWagner called the meeting to order.

II). Members unanimously approved the December 3, 2003 minutes.

III). Adam VanWagner called on Shawn Lavelle to comment on the motion he is bringing before the Committee. The motion calls for a periodic review of the Regents¹ Student Conduct Code by a subcommittee of the Senate Committee on Student Affairs. To accomplish this, Mr. Lavelle proposes an amendment to the Senate Bylaws.

The Committee spent a considerable amount of time wordsmithing and discussing the motion. Members provided suggestions for making the document more succinct and comprehensive. In theory, members agreed

with the motion, but were reluctant to act on it until the changes that were discussed today were incorporated into a final document.

Adam VanWagner noted that Mr. Lavelle is asking that this motion be considered in conjunction with the Joint Statement on the Rights and Freedoms of Students. This motion charges the subcommittee that will be reviewing the Student Conduct Code to use the Joint Statement on the Rights and Freedoms of Students as guide. This Committee needs to decide if this is a good idea or not.

IV). Adam VanWagner distributed the housing survey results, which were received from the Twin Cities, Morris and Duluth campuses. Crookston campus information is forthcoming and distributed to members once received.

Mr. VanWager reminded members that the Committee¹'s goal is to investigate the availability of safe and affordable housing for students on all four campuses. Mr. VanWagner asked members how they would like to proceed with this matter.

It was noted that the percentage of students, after their freshmen year, returning to on-campus housing on the Twin Cities campus is relatively low. Housing and Residential Life plans to start collecting data to explain this phenomenon. It was noted that this could likely be attributed to the fact that a majority of housing spaces are reserved every year for incoming freshmen. The Committee questioned whether the demand for upperclassmen to live on-campus exceeds the supply of available on-campus housing options. If so, are upperclassmen being forced to live in off-campus housing that is oftentimes substandard? It was suggested that Laurie McLaughlin, director of Housing and Residential Life be invited to the March 3rd meeting to:

- Explain the process that upperclassmen go through to secure on-campus housing (including information on whether they can get bumped if there is a housing shortage for incoming freshmen).
- Discuss whether there is a demand for the type of residence halls that the University offers or if the University should be exploring other options, especially for upperclassmen?

- Share information on the housing survey that Housing and Residential Life plans to conduct on the Twin Cities campus.

In Mr. VanWagner¹'s opinion, the University does a good job of providing safe housing for students. However, he questions whether the University should be providing safe housing for more students than is currently available. Mr. VanWagner would like to see Housing and Residential Life take a systematic approach to uncovering whether there exists a demand for on-campus housing by upperclassmen. A member questioned whether students would be willing to pay market rates if the University were to expand its housing services. Safe and affordable housing with amenities and proximity to campus comes with a price.

Other comments/questions arising from this discussion:

- It was suggested that the Committee investigate whether Dining Services is providing the types of meal plans that students are interested in?
- What is the rationale for favoring freshmen over upperclassmen in terms of on-campus housing? Freshmen are guaranteed housing in order to promote student development, good grades, retention, etc.
- Once the Office of Housing and Residential Life collects data on the reasons why students tend to move off-campus after their freshmen year, what should be done with this information? Will this information be used to build facilities that are more closely aligned to these students needs and desires.
- Many of the rules that are imposed in the residence halls help to foster a safe environment. If no such rules existed, would this type of housing still be safe despite the fact it satisfies building code requirements? What is the University¹'s contractual legal obligation to students that choose to live in on-campus housing?

Kendre Turonie reported that the City and the Southeast Como and Marcy Holmes are looking into the possibility of building cooperative housing as a way to meet the demand for safe and affordable housing for students. MSA has been encouraged to get involved in this initiative as well.

Adam VanWagner requested that members review the housing materials distributed at today¹'s meeting and let him or Renee Dempsey, Senate staff, know of other questions that they would like Laurie McLaughlin to address at the Committee¹'s next meeting on March 3rd, 2004.

V). Adam VanWagner announced that the Student Services Fee Subcommittee will be convened this year to receive reports from the Twin Cities and coordinate campuses concerning the fees process. Mr. VanWagner asked for volunteers to serve on this subcommittee. The following individuals volunteered:

- Adam VanWagner (Twin Cities undergraduate)
- Professor Iraj Bashiri
- Shawn Lavelle (Twin Cities graduate student)
- June Nobbe (appointed by Gerald Rinehart)

Subcommittee vacancies that remain include:

- Another faculty representative
- Staff from each of the coordinate campuses (appointed by their respective Vice Chancellor)
- Three student vacancies, one from each of the coordinate campuses, Crookston, Duluth and Morris.

In the event that a vacancy cannot be filled from within SCSA, the seat(s) in question shall be filled by a member of the Senate Consultative Committee, or their designee, meeting the designated criteria.

VI). Adam VanWagner announced that the Student Affairs Committee needs a chair for 2004-2005. If anyone currently on the Committee is interested or knows of someone who might be interested, they were instructed to contact Adam VanWagner or Renee Dempsey.

VII). Hearing no further business, Adam VanWagner adjourned the meeting.

Renee Dempsey
University Senate