
The University Senate

FACULTY · STUDENT · P&A · CIVIL SERVICE

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Faculty Consultative Committee (FCC)

November 2, 2023

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 represent the views of, nor are they binding on, the senate, the administration or the Board of Regents.

[**In these minutes:** Announcements; FACHS Charge Discussion; Faculty Senate Constitution, Bylaws, and Rules; Conversation with Provost Croson; Conversation with Interim President Ettinger]

PRESENT: Mark Bee (chair), Abraham Ayebo, Rob Blair, David Brown, Liz Davis, Carl Flink, Jennifer Goodnough (vice chair), Sharon Jansa, Robert Jones, Perry Leo, Colleen Flaherty Manchester, Monica Luciana, Tania Mitchell, Sonali Pahwa, Katherine Scheil, Rachna Shah, Donna Spannaus-Martin, Clifford Steer, David Stenehjem, Subree Subramanian, Eric Van Wyk, Carston Wagner

REGRETS:

ABSENT: Ann Parr

GUESTS: Pawel Mroz, co-chair, Faculty Advisory Committee on the Health Sciences; Executive Vice President and Provost Rachel Croson; Interim President Jeff Ettinger

OTHERS: Maggie Flaten, assistant to the president, Office of the President; Deb Cran, chief of staff, Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost; Erin Heath, director, University Senate Office; Alex Lassiter, reporter, *Minnesota Daily*

1. Announcements

Professor Mark Bee, chair, called the meeting to order and provided updates on the Faculty Compensation Report. He informed members that the meeting with the Office of Human Resources went well, and they did not have any concerns about it. He stated that he would like the FCC to vote on the final report on November 16th, and asked members to provide feedback on the report and/or cover letter before November 16th.

Colleen Flaherty Manchester asked how it would be shared with other employee groups, etc. Bee said that he would send an advance copy to the chairs of the other consultative committees. He reported that he was still working on a communications plan, but that he planned to send it to all Faculty Senate members, and separately to all faculty and instructors. He asked for input on who (such as the Foundation, the Alumni Association, etc.) should be copied on the letter when it

went to the Board of Regents (BOR) and the president. Flaherty Manchester wondered if there should be an op ed about it.

Next, Bee asked Donna Spannaus-Martin and Rob Blair, faculty legislative liaisons, to report on a preliminary hearing on the University's supplemental budget request that they had attended on Monday. They reported the following:

There was a conversation about enrollment on system campuses; one legislator asked about campus closings, given the University of Wisconsin's announcement that they will close two campuses.

Other topics included campus safety; giving the land containing the Cloquet Forestry Center back to the Fond du Lac (it was noted that one legislator suggested the University should sell the land to help solve financial issues); comments about the war in Gaza on a department website; specific administrator business travel; and the difference between faculty and staff salaries considering who is included in staff (senior administration are included in staff salaries; legislators asked for a breakdown of staff types and salaries).

Spannaus-Martin said she gave examples of budget impacts on her department. A student was also present, she said, and legislators asked him about his student debt. Spannaus-Martin also informed legislators that they would be hearing more about faculty salaries in the near future.

Legislators made it clear that they didn't know whether a supplemental budget bill would even be introduced, as it depends on whether there is a state budget surplus again, and those numbers are not yet available.

Rick Wagner asked if the animosity seemed to stem from political issues, or from a distrust of higher education in general. Blair and Spannaus-Martin said it was probably a bit of both; they felt like there had been some improvement in the last year, but there was still work to be done.

Wagner also asked whether research funding was mentioned, and Blair and Spannaus-Martin said no.

2. FACHS Charge Discussion

Next, Pawel Mroz and Rob Jones, co-chairs, Faculty Advisory Committee on the Health Sciences (FACHS), presented [proposed changes to the FACHS charge](#) for input from the FCC.

The proposed changes were:

- Move from 10 to 9 members because the Center for Allied Health has moved into the College of Pharmacy.
- Allow member schools to have the freedom to nominate/elect a member regardless of their appointment type (tenured/tenure-track vs term or contract faculty).
- Remove the stipulation that the chair has to be a tenured faculty member.

Mroz provided these rationales for the proposed changes:

- The change in the faculty statute from the majority of tenure/tenure track to more inclusive of all tracks better reflects the actual composition of the faculty at schools represented by FACHS.
- This change will be more consistent with the freedom to nominate members by individual

schools' faculty governing bodies, irrespective of the appointment type.

- Faculty appointments across schools that are represented by FACHS are somewhat different from more traditional appointments at other schools, as the majority of faculty provide both academic and clinical services.
- FACHS has been led by co-chairs since its inception and the co-chair position has included non-tenured faculty. This proposed change is consistent with the more inclusive approach to all faculty tracks in shared governance and avoids a situation when the committee is struggling to appoint a chair/co-chair from only tenure/tenure track faculty members.

The following discussion ensued:

- Instead of going from 10 to 9 members based on Allied Health's merger with Pharmacy, could there be a seat for a more general Allied Health person? Mroz said that the committee had discussed that at length. They considered opening committee membership to smaller units but decided that it would make the committee too large. Right now each member represents a school, not a unit within a school. They decided, rather, that the committee would make a concerted effort to connect with the smaller units on a regular basis. In addition, the current Pharmacy representative is actually in occupational health.
- Changing things to reflect the reality of the situation is not ideal when what is happening on the ground is going in the wrong direction (such as the weakening of tenure).
- Having one chair be tenured is important because it is critical that leadership represent and value the tenure process. Tenure is also useful if the chair has to take a strong stance in opposition to the administration.

Mroz and Jones thanked members for their input and said they would consult further with FACHS.

3. Faculty Senate Constitution, Bylaws, and Rules

Amber Bathke, senior senate associate, University Senate Office, [presented proposed updates](#) to the Faculty Senate Constitution, Bylaws, and Rules. The following supplemental materials were provided:

- [Memo](#)
- [Proposed Constitution Amendments](#)
- [Proposed Bylaws Amendments](#)
- [Proposed Rules Amendments](#)

Bathke explained that a working group was tasked with conducting a full review of the University Senate system's Constitution, Bylaws, and Rules. The purpose of this review was to identify areas that required clarification and updating. While the proposed changes are mostly technical and grammatical, there are some sections that address outdated language, codify current practice, and/or modify procedures to align with common practice. She then walked the committee through the substantive changes.

Jenn Goodnough asked for clarification on the proposed change from "electing" a vice chair to "confirming" the vice chair. Bathke explained that the practice has been for the FCC to nominate the officers of the senate, including the vice chair, and for the Faculty Senate to vote on the slate of officers. Therefore, the "confirming" language is more accurate.

She also asked about the proposed striking of the provision that individuals with academic staff titles are only eligible to serve on the Senate Committee on Educational Policy (SCEP) and the Senate Research Committee if they are also eligible for the Faculty Senate. She noted that SCEP still has that provision in its charge, and wondered if that would have to be changed. Bathke explained that the reference in the SCEP to charge was under a specific bullet point, referring to seats reserved for faculty or “faculty-like” academic professionals; both SCEP and SRC now have dedicated seats for “general” academic professional members. Therefore, keeping this provision in an overarching manner would be contradictory.

A vote was held and the FCC approved the proposed changes. The body also voted to put the proposed changes on the November 30, 2023, Faculty Senate docket for discussion and a vote.

4. Conversation with Provost Croson

Executive Vice President and Provost Rachel Croson gave the following updates:

- Recommended changes to the general education requirements (Core Curriculum 2025) will be discussed at the next FCC meeting, with a vote at the Faculty Senate in the spring.
- A task force will be formed to look at potentially unifying calendars across the system, in order to increase “systemness” by enabling cross-campus enrollment, teaching, etc.
- The Systemwide Enrollment Council has been asked to work on two other initiatives related to systemness: the Say Yes initiative, whereby applicants who are not admitted to the campus to which they applied, could be admitted to other campuses without having to apply separately; and unifying course numbering system across all campuses. The latter would apply to 1XXX-2XXX level courses that cover the same content. If the University is successful at doing this, said Croson, the Minnesota State system may also adopt these course numbers, which would make transferring easier.

FCC members had the following feedback and questions:

- It will be important to be mindful of the fact that the Faculty Senate just voted a few years ago on a different set of proposed changes to the core curriculum, and the proposed changes were not approved.
- Members expressed concern about unifying course numbers because the number of courses in a series of intro-level courses often varies by campus (two versus four, for example); different expectations in entry-level courses across campuses, etc. Croson recognized that it would be a difficult task, and assured members that if the course content doesn’t match, the course number would not be the same.
- Will the new curriculum address issues surrounding AI? Croson said that she would have to defer to Professor Will Durfee, chair of the Core Curriculum 2025 Committee, on that. She pointed out that there are many groups thinking about this issue and its impact on many different aspects of the University.

A discussion then ensued about the possibility of unifying the academic calendars. Members commented that especially for those on the St. Paul campus, starting classes during or before the State Fair would be a nightmare. It also has move-in implications for students living on the St. Paul campus. Croson acknowledged these concerns and clarified that the recommendation would be to start before the State Fair (mid-August). This would also allow for a fall break on the Twin Cities and Rochester campuses, which students have advocated for. Members pointed out that starting before the Fair would add 2 weeks for 9-month contracts. Goodnough pointed out that

Morris's 9-month contracts have started in mid-August for a long time; they end on graduation day.

Many members thought starting before the Fair would have a detrimental effect on research agendas; for faculty the focused time for research is crucial, and the trade-off of non-instructional days in the fall semester won't rectify the lost concentrated research time.

Croson thanked the committee for its input and committed to further discussions before proceeding.

5. Conversation with Interim President Ettinger

Bee welcomed Interim President Jeff Ettinger, who provided the following updates:

- With the approval of the Board of Regents (BOR), The University is making a supplemental budget request of \$45 million in recurring operational funds from the state. The additional funds would help address a portion of expected cost increases and to minimize tuition increases. University officials participated in a hearing of the House Higher Education Committee, on Monday, October 30, chaired by Representative Gene Pelowski. Ettinger and Julie Tonneson, vice president and budget director, University Budget and University Finance, were joined by University of Minnesota Police Department Chief Matt Clark, faculty legislative liaison Donna Spannaus-Martin, and Shashank Murali, Twin Cities Undergraduate Student Government president. Five Regents were also in attendance, which legislators noticed. Ettinger emphasized that Chair Pelowski was careful to set expectations, such as that if there was no extra state budget surplus this year, there would be no money for a second-year allocation. Ettinger remarked that the February budget forecast would be a key indicator of a possible supplemental budget.
- Ettinger met with the co-chairs of the President's Initiative on Student Mental Health (PRISMH): Professor Robert Dunbar from the Rochester campus, who is replacing Professor Tabitha Grier-Reed as co-chair; and Maggie Towle, senior associate vice president, Office for Student Affairs, who is continuing as co-chair. They are working to assemble a transition team to facilitate the transition from a presidential initiative to a program.
- Ettinger traveled to the Morris campus to participate in the inauguration of Janet Schrunk Ericksen as the seventh chancellor of the Morris campus.
- The search for the next chancellor of the University of Minnesota Duluth (UMD) is moving forward. In September, Ettinger announced that they had launched the search, with thanks to Lori Carrell, chancellor of the Rochester campus, and Lisa Erwin, vice chancellor for student life and dean of students at UMD, who are serving as co-chairs of the search committee. The full search committee held its first meeting earlier this week and will hold listening sessions with the UMD community on Monday, November 6. The feedback from those listening sessions will advise the committee's development of the position profile. Candidate recruitment is expected to get underway this winter, leading to finalist interviews and the appointment of the next UMD chancellor during the spring 2024 semester.
- The [Governor's Task Force on Academic Health at the University of Minnesota](#) met twice in early October, with further meetings scheduled over the coming months. A written summary of recommendations is due to Governor Tim Walz in January 2024.
- Conversations have also been occurring since early September with Fairview, as both entities assess the future of the partnership.

- Officials are also looking to expand the Duluth medical program from the current structure where students do their first two years at Duluth and finish at the Twin Cities (or elsewhere) to a full four-year program at Duluth.

Bee asked Ettinger to comment on the fact that some legislators believe the University can solve all of its budget problems by getting rid of administrators. He wondered whether there is a way to get past that. Ettinger said they are working on parsing out what they feel is a “proper” administrative level and comparing it with peers, as well as reminding legislators that the University is uniquely situated as a national and global institution in addition to having a state mission.

Sonali Pahwa voiced concern about academic freedom violations witnessed against anti-war protestors on campus, and recommended [an article](#) to Ettinger, as a way of addressing these challenges in the context of war. Ettinger said he would take a look at it.

In the interest of time, Bee adjourned the meeting.

Amber Bathke
University Senate Office