



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
TWIN CITIES

All University Senate Consultative Committee

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Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455

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SENSE OF THE MEETING

Faculty Consultative Committee and the Regents
May 7, 1981

The Faculty Consultative Committee and the University Regents convened at 6:00 p.m. at the Campus Club on May 7, 1981 for a dinner meeting. Present were President Magrath, Regents Casey, Dosland, Drake, Lebedoff, Long, McGuiggan, Schertler, and Unger, and regents secretary Wilson, and FCC members Brasted, Eaton, Pratt, Quie, Schletzer and Swan, and members-elect Fredricks and Howe.

President Magrath introduced FCC chair Marcia Eaton, who presented the members-elect from the Twin Cities Campus, Virginia Fredricks and John Howe. (Rick Purple, ex-officio to SCC for 1981-82 as incoming vice-chair of the Senate, was unable to attend.) President Magrath introduced the new regents: Verne Long, an agriculturalist and farmer, six-term legislator, termed "a very good friend of the University," and Willis "Bill" Drake, founder and CEO of Datacard, who has been serving on the IT advisory committee. (David Roe, Minnesota head of the AFL/CIO, was unable to attend.) The President described the Consultative Committee to the new regents as a hard-working, very significant, truly consultative body, and its faculty members as "really outstanding."

Marcia Eaton explained that, following the FCC's February presentation on successful faculty responses to changing needs within the University, the faculty would on this occasion describe some specific present problems. The faculty appreciate, she said, that the regents share the same overall concerns.

Bob Brasted described the phenomenon and significance of a drying-up of the T.A. supply for General Chemistry. General Chemistry serves 4,000 to 6,000 students annually. Half of the 44 staff members in Chemistry participate in the introductory courses. The standard and necessary number of T.A.'s is 125.* The department never knows, however, until shortly before the start of fall quarter, how many positions it will have funding for, and usually begins with 400-500 students on waiting lists. They try to accommodate everyone which may require hiring additional teachers--some good, some poor--at the last minute.

The T.A.'s are graduate students. This year, to date, Chemistry has 20 instead of the usual 45 entering graduate students. If 25 more qualified graduate students do not enroll, up to 3,000 undergraduates will not be accommodated in introductory Chemistry. He is worried that many prospective students will choose to go to other universities. The reason for the dearth of qualified applicants to the graduate program lies in the high starting salaries available to bright young bachelor's graduates.

The faculty searches for the best answers. Limiting IT enrollment would make only a small difference since about 90% of introductory chemistry students

* 125 TA's over the academic year for all courses taught (about 30 a quarter plus about 40-45 for all other courses in Gen. Chem. summer session and CEE.

are in CLA.

They cannot reduce or eliminate laboratories and still teach chemistry. They cannot rely on machine teaching except as a supplement. Eliminating the problem-solving component of the course would ease instructor work-load, but problem-solving is a unique and essential part of American education. Assigning senior staff to teach the labs is clearly not making the best use of their capacities. If Chemistry hired more teaching specialists, the quality would be widely variable.

Virginia Fredricks explained that Theater Arts is also short of graduate students, for two reasons. For year the department enjoyed judiciously dispersing the salary of a full professor while Arthur Ballet was employed by the National Endowment for the Arts. (He continued to teach two courses here, for free!) Now Professor Ballet has returned to the University and requires his salary. Theater Arts' soft money is no more. Theater Arts, like Chemistry, does not know in advance how much money the department will be allotted for T.A.'s. Hence it has great difficulty recruiting graduate students and the best prospects often get away. The department once had 400 graduate students. They have recently approved 70 applicants. However, they have nowhere near that number of T.A.-ships to offer. She cited the Music Department's loss of the organ teacher position as particularly regrettable. Art is an important part of the culture of the Twin Cities and the state, she stressed, but the departments cannot offer much incentive to students who need some financial help. Enrollment, meanwhile, has not declined.

Regent McGuigan asked whether the budgeting procedures had not been refined in the last two years to give the departments better predictions as to how much money they would receive. President Magrath said the procedure is better but that the University still cannot promise the money until it knows it has the money. While the numbers of students coming into all programs remains constant, the money from the state has declined in real dollars.

John Howe, long a member of the CLA budget committee, confirmed that some T.A. positions are guaranteed in almost every department. However, the number of budgeted T.A.'s in History is now half what it was 10 years ago. Regent McGuigan asked if the shortage of funds for T.A.'s will not become even worse as the already high proportion of tenured faculty becomes even higher. A dilemma emerged. President Magrath said that the University has to protect its tenured faculty and even tenure-track non-tenured faculty, and that the costs of litigation would be high if it tried to dismiss such a person. Regent McGuigan pointed out that without T.A.'s, the University will apparently have far fewer students.

Vera Schletzer noted that the recent staff cut of 2 positions in Prospective Student Services has negative implications for enrollments. All the circumstances that hurt day students also hurt evening students, she said. The CEE Counseling staff has become as efficient as humanly possible--28,000 contacts with students per year.

John Howe said that CLA's faculty, administration, and students have committees making exhaustive efforts to stretch the resources. Many CLA departments have increased their teaching hours. Enrollment is at an all-time

high yet real budget dollars have declined. There are virtually no new faculty positions, yet the disciplines are growing. The aging faculty needs rejuvenation, needs the possibility for sabbatical leaves and other means of new learning.

A vacated position from any unit in CLA goes into the general pool. Every two years the budget committee assesses the departmental requests for additional positions and parcels out the spots. Of 600 faculty, CLA can replace about 8 this year and probably about 5 next year. The situation has implications for affirmative action. How can CLA hire more women and minorities when it is not hiring faculty?

Regent Casey asked Bob Brasted whether more money in Chemistry would really bring in more good students. Brasted allowed that graduate school enrollment is to a large extent determined independent of money. Chemistry is simply not getting enough qualified applicants. Chemistry goes to extreme ends, including flying in a prospect and spouse so that both can find out if the Twin Cities would suit them. Pat Swan said if being part of academia were as appealing to the good prospects as are their other options, they would be coming here. Regent Casey expressed his feeling that if the prospect of high pay were the only way to enroll them, that was not a good enough answer.

Marcia Eaton remarked that probably none of the faculty went into academics for the money. However, she said, the discrepancy between what they can earn in the academy and what they could earn outside has widened. Undergraduate students sense the dismal morale and are not attracted. In Philosophy, she remarked, terrible fights develop over relatively insignificant amounts of money in the questions of merit money distribution.

Doug Pratt said that the graduate student fellowships have been one of the best things to happen to the University. CBS also works hard to help a candidate's spouse get settled in at the University, he reported. CBS does not have severe problems getting graduate students, but is finding it hard to get young faculty. Bio-technology he cited as the big puller-away. In order to attract good young faculty CBS has had to collapse the salary structure, raising assistant professor rates so high they differ little from those of full professors. This change has hurt morale.

Regent Lebedoff said he hopes the faculty know that the Regents, equally with the faculty, want to preserve the quality of this University. He urged people to differentiate between the problems over which we have no control and those over which we have some control. Among the conditions wholly beyond the University's control are the salary structure in the private sector, the fiscal squeeze on states all over the country, and demographics. Fifteen years ago, in the time of rapidly rising enrollments, vast systems of higher education were built, all of which now are being maintained at great cost. Huge numbers of faculty were hired and quickly tenured--which at the time did not seem a bad thing to do. But it remains a fact that there are fewer 15-year olds now than 19-year olds, and fewer 12-year olds than 15-year olds.

Some of the problems we can do something about, though, through reallocation, he asserted. There should be a state-wide reallocation of funds. Many funds going elsewhere should be directed to the University of Minnesota. The University, its faculty, its friends, have been too timid in their appeals. Minnesota has been thoroughly democratic, funding everything, saying that everything is

equally worthy. Now it is time to stop being so civil, he declared. The University is better, worthier, than some other systems funded by the state.

The University also can tackle reallocation internally. In this realm, Lebedoff said, the Regents need communication with and the assistance of the faculty. When the Regents make reallocation choices, it will be good to have faculty support, he said, not faculty silence. He sees it as a mistake that the University has not been hiring new faculty. Yet when he spoke up a few years ago for earlier retirement, he was virtually shunned. Regents can make the hard decisions, he said, but they will need the support of the faculty.

Pat Swan said the academic units need interaction with the Regents for a broadly representative perspective of the University's responsibility to the state. When a department must make cuts, its first concern is for its major students, but it should not ignore its responsibility to students from other programs. Can enrollment cuts be justified she inquired? We need to talk, department to department and program to program, about one another's needs. Any cut is likely to effect a spiraling downturn. A cut in a Food Science and Nutrition research lab led to cutting a highly valued student lab which the research funds had supported.

Marcia Eaton called on Vera Schletzer to deliver the valediction. She described her three years on SCC as interesting and valuable. She said the faculty are well aware as they grumble to the Regents that they are carrying coals to Newcastle. But the faculty talk thus candidly to the Regents because they can reach the Regents and know how much the Regents care about the University.

The meeting adjourned shortly after 9:00 p.m.

Meredith B. Poppele,
SCC Secretary

C O P Y

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April 27, 1981

Duane Wilson
Secretary, Board of Regents
220 Morrill Hall

Dear Duane:

The Faculty Consultative Committee looks forward to meeting with the Regents on May 7. We would very much like to continue the discussion we began at our winter quarter meeting. At that time several of us described ways in which faculty have responded to changes, both internal and external, in recent years. We are all concerned that the more or less familiar ways of responding to demands will be unavailable as we face possible financial crises in the coming years. All of us are particularly worried that our academic programs will deteriorate. We have begun to discuss our mutual concerns with President Magrath and several vice presidents. We would also like to use this opportunity to share our worries with the Regents.

Respectfully yours,

/s/

Marcia M. Eaton, Chair,
Senate Consultative Committee

MME:mbp
cc: C. Peter Magrath