

Classroom Advisory Subcommittee (CAS)
October 19, 2020
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 reflect the views of, nor are they binding on, the senate, the administration or the Board of Regents.

[**In these minutes:** Updates from the Chair; Office of Classroom Management Annual Survey Update]

PRESENT: Mark Bergen (chair), Todd Arnold, Keith Brown, James Cotner, Sehoya Cotner, Dave Crane, Dave Hutton, Maki Isaka, Murray Jensen, Roberta Kehne, Sandy Mand, Dalton VonRuden

REGRETS: Scott Abernathy, Samantha Johnson, J.D. Walker

ABSENT: Florina Gregoire, Andrew Jenks

1. Updates from the Chair

Professor Mark Bergen, chair, called the meeting to order and provided the following updates:

- He had spoken with Professor Tom Chase, chair of the Senate Committee on Educational Policy (SCEP), which is CAS's parent committee. Chase had inquired as to whether he could refer a dean of a college who had classroom-related concerns to CAS. Chase also invited CAS to meet with SCEP sometime during spring 2021.
- A meeting of the senate committee chairs was held on September 15, 2020. Chairs shared the [priorities](#) of each committee.
- [Data](#) from a survey conducted by the Student Senate is now available.

Bergen then asked members to provide any updates they had. Members made the following comments:

- Roberta Kehne reported that while some students registered with the Disability Resource Center preferred distance learning and some struggled with it, there seemed to be no major issues with it.
- A lot of the instructional methods in use currently due to the pandemic will be useful in the future, such as having certain course components delivered asynchronously.
- Zoom chats during a class session are extremely fruitful. It would be great to find a way to preserve that in the face-to-face environment post-pandemic. Murray Jensen shared a paper related to that question (Jensen, M., Johnson, D. W., & Johnson, R. (2002). Impact of positive interdependence during electronic quizzes on discourse and achievement. *The Journal of Educational Research*, 95(3), 161-166.).
- The committee was interested in learning how things are going in fall 2020 versus spring 2020, in terms of hybrid classes; accessibility (financial, disability, technology), midterm alerts (are they up in compared to other terms).
- The Office of Information Technology has 45 open positions and has received permission to fill 3-4 of these. Eventually, decisions will have to be made based on capacity with reduced personnel.

- Facilities Management (FM) has been primarily focused on disinfecting and sanitizing the campus; there have been no complaints on that front. Air quality and ventilation are other important considerations; FM conducted an assessment with energy management and faculty who research such issues and identified classrooms without sufficient mechanical ventilation. As a result, the University purchased 130 HEPA filtration units to supplement in those classrooms, and has 100 more on order. They are turning on fan systems to circulate outside air two hours before classes start.
- In private industry, many companies are drastically cutting back in the physical footprint. Norms related to remote work and office space are likely to be permanently altered. If some departments turn over their office space to central management, the Office of Classroom management can make use of this for learning space.
- There has been a large increase in the number of students suffering from mental health issues. How can we better support students in the remote environment?
- Todd Arnold remarked that modifications such as flexible deadlines, eliminating timed tests, and making quizzes open book can help ease students' stress; since putting these measures into place, Arnold said, he did not feel he had lost any ability to assess student learning.

2. Office of Classroom Management Annual Survey Update

Bergen turned the floor over to David Crane, who began by playing a short video demonstrating some of the new in-room technology for delivering remote instruction. He noted that Noah Holm, academic technologist, Office of Classroom Management (OCM) would give a longer, live demo at the next meeting.

Crane then shared the revised questions to be sent out in OCM's annual survey to faculty and instructors. The questions had been revised to address the issues facing faculty during the pandemic. Crane noted that [data from the previous three years](#) is available on OCM's website. The committee provided recommendations and feedback on the revised questions.

Hearing no further business, Bergen adjourned the meeting.

Amber Bathke
University Senate Office