

## **2010-11 UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA**

**MARCH 3, 2011**

### **STUDENT SENATE MINUTES: No. 3**

The third meeting of the Student Senate for 2010-11 was convened in Coffman Theatre on Thursday, March 3, 2011, at 11:36 a.m. Coordinate campuses were linked by ITV. Checking or signing the roll as present were 27 student members. Chair Aaron Carlson presided.

#### **1. ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSES TO SENATE ACTIONS Information**

Resolution on the Policy on Makeup Work for Legitimate Absences – Sickness of Minor Dependents

Approved by the: Student Senate May 6, 2010

Approved by the: Administration December 2, 2010 (as amended to include all dependents)

Approved by the: Board of Regents – no action required

Resolution on the Policy on Makeup Work for Legitimate Absences – Student Senators

Approved by the: Student Senate May 6, 2010

Approved by the: Administration did not approve\*

Approved by the: Board of Regents – no action required

\* While the President fully supports and encourages student participation in governance and other leadership activities at the University, he cannot support missing class to do so, particularly when the class schedule is clearly identified at the beginning of each semester.

#### **2. COUNCIL OF ACADEMIC PROFESSIONALS AND ADMINISTRATORS UPDATE**

##### **For Information:**

Council of Academic Professionals and Administrators (CAPA) represents the professional class of 5200 non-unionized employees at the University. This class was started in 1980 and CAPA was formed as an advisory committee to the President. Academic professionals (P&A) have skills between civil service employees and faculty in jobs such as teachers, researchers, advisors, counselors, and extension service workers. Most people stay in this classification or move to a faculty position. P&A employees have some of the same benefits as faculty, but work on annually renewable contracts.

CAPA meets from 9:00-11:00 am the third Friday of each month in 101 Walter Library and meetings are open to the public. CAPA consists of 40 representatives from campus units and colleges and has four committees: Benefits and Compensation, Representation and Governance, Professional Development and Recognition, and Communications.

##### **Discussion:**

Steven Pearthree, Vice Chair of the Council of Academic Professionals and Administrators (CAPA), said that CAPA is moving to become a P&A Senate on July 1 now that the President and Regents have approved the constitutional language. On February 24 CAPA was a sponsor of a resolution that was approved by the Faculty Senate. The resolution asked faculty to take P&A

and civil service governance service into account when doing annual reviews. At today's University Senate meeting a resolution on the personal floating holiday will be presented and P&A would like student support. This resolution asks the Office of Human Resources to allow P&A and faculty to take their one personal floating holiday at any time during the year instead of the winter break period as is now the timeframe.

CAPA is also continuing its leadership mining series. Joel Maturi, President Bruininks, and Vice President Carol Carrier are scheduled for spring semester. It is also involved in the proposed changes that have been made to the non-renewal Policy. There was a recent article in the Minnesota Daily on this topic. The biggest issue for CAPA is that it cuts the notice period in half for long-term P&A.

CAPA committees are also working on issues. The Professional Recognition and Development Committee is working with the Educational Policy Committee to allow teaching P&A to apply for the two teaching awards, has scheduled monthly brown bag lunches through April, and is working on the Outstanding Unit Award. The Representation and Governance Committee is starting the yearly election process for CAPA leadership and members.

### **3. CIVIL SERVICE COMMITTEE UPDATE**

#### **For Information:**

The Civil Service Committee (CSC) represents the approximately 5000 employees in this category which includes accountants, scientists, executive assistants, and administrators. The classification was started in 1945 with the passage of the civil service rules by the Regents. In 1984 PELRA was passed which allowed for the creation of a bargaining unit separate from civil service employees.

CSC is composed of fifteen members and several alternates. The committee elects a chair and vice chair, with the vice chair becoming next year's chair. Members are selected by a committee and appointed by the President to three-year terms. CSC meets the fourth Thursday of each month from 9:00 am-12:00 pm.

#### **Discussion:**

Frank Strahan, Chair of the Civil Service Committee (CSC), said they are working with the Office of Human Resources on transitioning to a Civil Service Senate. There is agreement on the language changes. Those changes will be presented to the University Senate on March 31 for action. He noted that there has been discussion in the news from several states regarding the vilification of public employees. He wants people to know that public employees are not the root of all evil at the University and he encouraged students to contact their legislators regarding this issue.

### **4. STUDENT SENATE/ STUDENT SENATE CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE CHAIR REPORT**

Aaron Carlson, Student Senate and Student Senate Consultative Committee (SSCC) Chair, said that the Governor has released his budget which includes a five percent cut for higher education, including the state Office of Higher Education. That office is predicting a \$35 million shortfall for 2012-13. He believes that the figures in the Governor's budget are idealistic due to Republican control of the legislature. State bills being considered include one on a tuition freeze and a referendum on student fees. The student rally was February 22 at the capital and was a

great success. The federal government is considering cuts to the Teach for America Program and Pell Grants.

At the University, a Rochester Student Association has been formed and held its first elections. The Regents in February heard about student service fees and a possible fee for some majors. SSCC will be looking into mandate insurance through Boynton Health Service, student intellectual property, and the Memorandum of Understanding, which is on today's agenda.

He then asked Joshua Preston to talk about a student legislative collation (SLC). Joshua Preston said that a retreat was held that weekend with student representatives from the Twin Cities undergraduates, Morris, Rochester, and Crookston. Talks focused on an SLC structure and relationships to what already exists. The next steps are to get graduate and professional students involved and look at funding.

## **5. ASSEMBLY/ASSOCIATION UPDATES**

**Crookston** – Thomas Haarstick said that CSA is working on its constitution and participating in today's convocation. The 2015 campus plan is being developed and students are involved in this process.

**Duluth** – Jonathan Lundberg reported that inauguration week ends tomorrow with the actual inauguration. A community service day was incorporated in the celebration. UMDSA is working on getting food quality and nutrition information to students and is holding a course guide drive to encourage faculty to submit course descriptions for the fall course guide.

**Morris** – Mark Privratsky stated that MCSA has been working on a ride board, book exchange, technology fee allocations, and online campus elections.

**Rochester** – Maddy Hammerlund stated that the Rochester Student Association (RSA) has been formed and elections filled all positions.

**Graduate and Professional Student Assembly** – Bree Dalager reported GAPSA's President and Executive Vice President resigned over the break. Elections were held and Terrance Paape moved from an SSCC representative to another GAPSA position. Filing has now started for next year's president. A discussion was recently held about the Memorandum of Understanding. GAPSA received its full fees request. During campus safety week St. Paul lighting and rerouting for 911 calls was brought up. GAPSA also passed a resolution on an external, independent study on the Markingson case but the Regents have decided against it.

**Minnesota Student Association** - Luke Nichols noted that MSA's budget for next year was reduced due to a paper error. Elections were also held for three at-large positions.

## **6. STUDENT SENATE CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE Resolution on a Student Evaluation of Teaching Award Action**

### **Resolution on a Student Evaluation of Teaching Award**

Whereas, University of Minnesota students stand to benefit from knowing how students of previous semesters have graded teachers' past performance.

Whereas, providing students with the means to differentiate among instructors according to the quality of their instruction allows students to make better-informed choices while registering for classes.

Whereas, publicly recognizing those instructors whom students rate highly provides a positive incentive for instructors to adapt their teaching to better suit the needs of students.<sup>1</sup>

Whereas, student course evaluations constitute the most accessible and relevant measure of the teaching that occurs at the University of Minnesota.

For the reasons stated above, therefore be it decided that the Student Senate endorses the following action:

The creation of an award which recognizes the top rated instructors by their students, according to the Student Rating of Teaching Forms. All teachers will automatically be considered for the award, but only those whose student evaluations place them in the them in top Nth percentile of all teachers will be eligible to receive it. Those eligible teachers will receive notification of their achievement and choose whether or not to accept the award. The names of those teachers who accept the award as well as the course each taught would be made public in the form of a list. Student Senate supports the integration of this award into existing university databases and search engines such as the University's online program "Class Search," whereby a student who refines his or her search to "Teaching award winners only" could see recipients of this award.

The administration shall formally recognize the creation of the Student Evaluation of Teaching award by amending the Policy on Evaluation of Teaching: Twin Cities, Crookston, Morris, Rochester as follows (language to be added is underlined):

#### **Evaluation of Teaching: Twin Cities, Crookston, Morris, Rochester**

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#### **C. Student Rating of Teaching**

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#### **15. Student Evaluation of Teaching Award**

- a. The creation of an award which recognizes the top rated instructors by their students, according to the Student Rating of Teaching Forms. All teachers will automatically be considered for the award, but only those whose student evaluations place them in the them in top Nth percentile of all teachers will be eligible to receive it.
- b. Those eligible teachers will receive notification of their achievement and choose whether or not to accept the award. The names of those teachers who accept the award as well as the course each taught would be made public in the form of a list.
- c. Student Senate supports the integration of this award into existing university databases and search engines such as the University's online program "Class Search," whereby a student who refines his or her search to "Teaching award winners only" could see recipients of this award.

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<sup>1</sup> Office of the Vice Provost for Faculty and Academic Affairs

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## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **Student Evaluation of Teaching Award**

#### **How will the data that provides the basis to rank the instructors be obtained?**

The data that will determine teaching performance will be collected from the first four questions of the Student Rating of Teaching forms. These questions include: “The instructor was well prepared for class;” “the instructor presented the subject matter clearly;” “the instructor provided feedback intended to improve my course performance;” and “the instructor treated me with respect.”

#### **How will instructors be given the choice to release their name as well as the course title they taught in a publication of the top n% of instructors?**

Instructors will be prompted by the University of Minnesota using the most feasible means, to be determined by the administration, to opt into providing their name and course title for the publication of a list of the top N% of instructors for the previous semester or indefinitely until stated otherwise. Instructors will be given the choice to opt out at any time.

#### **The list will be published how often?**

A list will be published for each semester and will remain available to students for registration purposes for the following two semesters. For example, students registering for classes during fall 2011 will have access to the lists compiled from the previous two semesters.

All the lists would be available online or to the public, but only those from the most recent year would be used in the “Class Search” program.

#### **How many instructors will receive the award?**

In practice therefore, the proportion of instructors who receive the award will be less than or equal to N%. However, all instructors who receive it would undisputedly reside within that percentile. This model stands in contrast to an alternative system in which instructors would choose whether to be even considered for the award.

#### **Will a complete list of instructors and rating information be available to students?**

Due to laws which restrict public access to personnel files and out of respect for teachers’ privacy, a complete list of instructors will not be available to students. A list of only those instructors from the top N% who have accepted the award will be available for student access. The list will feature their names alphabetically and the courses they taught.

#### **Will the data that provides the basis to rank the instructors be accessible to students?**

For the reasons mentioned above, the data that provides the basis to rank the instructors will not be accessible to the students.

## **DISCUSSION:**

Luke Nichols stated that he would like to have an award created that is based off the information collected from the first four questions on the faculty side of the student evaluation form. This would provide more information to students on which instructors perform well.

Q: Would all instructors be included in the award? Would it be by course?

A: Any instructor that is evaluated would be eligible to be included on the list and it would be by course.

A student said that he spoke with a member of the Educational Policy Committee (SCEP) about previous efforts to have student evaluations available online. If SCEP or the administration is approached for this issue, they might ask about progress on this other issue. He suggested that this issue be tabled until SSCC can follow-up with the Office of Measurement Services (OMS).

A motion was then made and seconded to table this issue.

A senator agreed that it would be a good idea to talk with OMS before moving forward on this resolution.

Another senator spoke in favor of this resolution. While there are student questions, there is no access to this information so he would like to see this resolution approved as well.

With no further discussion a vote was taken and the motion was approved.

**TABLED**

## **7. MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**

### **Discussion**

#### **MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**

##### **Student Involvement in University Decision Making**

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The University of Minnesota administration recognizes the value of student input to inform University decision-making, particularly when the decision will impact directly a significant student interest or the student experience. As past practice has demonstrated, (see the attached materials outlining existing student participation in University governance and decision making), the University has sought to uphold the following principles:

Students should be involved in the University decision-making process in consultative and representative capacities.

Students should be consulted in a timely and proactive manner on policy issues and other matters that will impact directly a significant student interest or the student experience.

Students may be consulted on other matters that will not impact a significant student interest or the student experience, and students may also request representation or consultation on other matters.

Students should be represented on system, campus, and college committees that are charged to make recommendations that will impact directly a significant student interest or the student experience.

Student input should be sought from regular consultation avenues that include campus student associations and the Student Senate. The administration may seek input from students beyond those consultation avenues

The Office for Student Affairs on the Twin Cities campus is working with students and the current administration to explore the feasibility of creating a Board of Regents or an administrative policy regarding student involvement and shared governance.

As part of this process, Student Affairs will work with students to create proposals regarding the following: 1) regular meetings of student leaders with senior administrators, 2) the range of issues that warrant student representation and/or consultation (as well as those that do not), 3) a process for nominating students who may serve on standing system- and campus-wide committees, 4) approaches to training/orienting students to their responsibilities as participants in University governance, and 5) a process for campus student associations and Student Senate to seek, collect, and communicate to the administration input of students outside of the regular consultation avenue.

As part of this Memorandum of Understanding, representatives from the appropriate offices are agreeing to meet monthly, January-May 2011, to develop these proposals, consult further with the current administration, and further explore the feasibility of an administrative or Regents policy.

Recognizing that this is a time of presidential transition, the parties agree that significant progress can be made but a final resolution may be after July 1, 2011.

Signed on December \_\_\_\_, 2010, by:

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Robert H. Bruininks, President, University of Minnesota

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E. Thomas Sullivan, Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost

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Gerald Rinehart, Vice Provost for Student Affairs

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Aaron Carlson, Chair, Student Senate

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Abou Amara, GAPSA President

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Sarah Shook, MSA President

**DISCUSSION:**

Bree Dalager said that the issue of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been discussed over several years and work started with the administration last year. An example being used is the Wisconsin legislative mandate for shared governance. A previous version was submitted by the students and this is the draft back from the administration. GAPSA's Executive Committee has voted not to sign this MOU.

Aaron Carlson said that he was first asked to sign the MOU during fall semester finals week. He circulated that draft to the Student Senate Consultative Committee (SSCC) members for their feedback. Another draft was circulated in January to SSCC. There is a meeting tomorrow at which time he will be asked to sign or provide an update. Therefore he would like feedback from senators.

A senator then said that the MSA Executive Committee approved the MOU.

Another senator said that the Law Council is concerned about the wishy-washy language and the lack of review by GAPSA as a whole.

Q: Why is GAPSA against the MOU?

A: GAPSA is opposed since the previous GAPSA president did not provide any information back to GAPSA's Executive Committee before he left and it was never brought to the full GAPSA. This also appears to be a statement on maintaining the status quo which not everyone thinks of as shared governance. There is also no timeline or work product in this draft.

A senator saw this document as a starting point for further discussion on problems that exist. He also worried about President Bruininks not signing it if it includes binding language for the next administration.

Another senator noted that if this MOU is signed, the students may not receive anything further in the future.

Q: Who attends the MOU meetings?

A: Aaron Carlson attends on behalf of the Student Senate.

A senator said that the MOU provides no language for who is involved and how they are chosen.

Another senator noted that the idea is interesting but it would be unrealistic to hold an election for positions every time a student voice is needed.

A straw poll was then taken and coordinate campus members were in favor of the MOU and Twin Cities members were opposed.

## **8. OLD BUSINESS**

**NONE**

## **9. NEW BUSINESS**

**NONE**

## **10. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:35 pm.



**Rebecca Hippert**  
**Abstractor**