

[In these minutes: Announcement of Outstanding Unit Award winner, Dean Beverly Durgan for Leadership Mining, Light rail transportation update, Employee rewards, recognition, and achievement report, elections]

CAPA MEETING
Friday, April 16, 2010

PRESENT

Representatives: Sarah Waldemar (chair), Neil Anderson, Richard Brown, Will Craig, Christine DeZelar-Tiedman, Stephanie Dilworth, Susan Doerr, Frank Douma, Pamela Enrici, Michael Fridgen, Scott Gilbert, Shawn Haag, Ann Hagen, Cynthia Hagley, Kirsten Jamsen, Jessica Kuecker Grotjohn, Scott Madill, Caitrin Mullan, David Nicolai, William Patrek, Steven Pearthree, Rand Rasmussen, Bill Roberts, Caroline Rosen, Cathy Schulz, Laura Seifert, Andrew Swain, Travis Trautman, Roger Wareham, Sheryl Weber-Paxton, Patrice Webster, Julie Westlund,

Alternates: Agnes Chagani, Henry Fulda, Stephen Hearn, Mary Jetter, Michelle Lubbers, Rebecca Moss, Karen Nichols, Tatyana Shamliyan, Kimberly Simon, Dale Swanson.

Guests: Dean Beverly Durgan, Lori Ann Vicich.

ABSENT/REGRETS

Regrets: Brenda Carriere.

Absent: Meg Stephenson, Pamela Wilson.

1. ANNOUNCEMENT OF 2010 OUTSTANDING UNIT AWARD WINNER

Mary Jetter said that eight nominations were received this year. The winning nominee is from Theatre Arts and Dance.

2. LEADERSHIP MINING DISCUSSION WITH DEAN BEVERLY DURGAN

Beverly Durgan, Dean of the University of Minnesota Extension and Agricultural Experiment Station, joined the meeting to discuss leadership. She said that it is not something that she usually thinks about, but this opportunity has given her time to reflect on her style and effectiveness.

She said that she has been at the University since 1985 as an agricultural faculty member. She received a business degree from Montana State and then became an agronomy and weed scientist at North Dakota State. At the University she has had a research appointment in addition to teaching and extension service. She was an Associate Dean for Research in the College of Food, Agricultural, and Natural Resource Sciences for 10 years. She then became Dean of the University of Minnesota Extension five years ago as well as Director of the Agricultural Experiment Station. Extension has 850 employees of which 65 percent work off-campus in 87 county offices and 16 regional centers.

She said that effective leaders are ones who possess the following skills:

- Know or are willing to learn the culture of the organization as a whole and cultures that exist within units or campuses
- Be open and honest which can be more difficult in hard economic times since not everyone can be involved in some of the tough decisions
- Accountable when making decisions and be able to answer the why and how questions
- Hold others accountable for decisions
- Follow the goals and mission of the University. For her unit this means following the land-grant mission to serve the state. This becomes harder with less resources, but she believes in the University's land-grant mission and service through extension.
- Help people solve problems while building their leadership ability
- Supporting employees, especially in hard times

Dean Durgan stated that as a leader, one needs to find themselves. This is more than studying what it means to be a good leader. It means trying different options, knowing that not all will work, while being true to one's own style. A leader needs to listen to comments from other people, but be able to convey messages in one's own words. She has learned that being direct is not always the best option and sometimes people need time to talk around an issue before a determination can be made.

She said that she sets high standards for herself and her staff in regard to maintaining the mission of her unit. She tries to instill in people why she works at the University. She believes in professional development which is why she has maintained funding for everyone in her unit. She has given a mandate that professional development funds be maintained as a way to continue to invest in people. There is an opportunity for everyone to lead and the opportunities might vary greatly by person, but this can only be accomplished if people are able to develop professionally. She also tried to deliberately thank employees for their contributions and appreciate the work being done by everyone.

She has also learned that people need to be a priority in every decision that is made. She has worked to drive down other costs so that staff can be maintained. She is proud to report that there have not been any layoffs due to budgetary reasons in the five years that she has been dean. She also realizes that this will be more difficult to do in tighter times.

Dean Durgan has learned to have patience. This is hard for her but she knows that other people need time to adjust to changes and so this sometimes means that she needs to wait. She has also learned to choose her battles wisely by keeping unit goals in mind. For every decision she wants to know the impact, outcome, and audience. Her audience differs from other units as it ranges from non-credit adults to youth in 4-H. Lastly, she needs to be a good scholar by knowing the business of education and research. To do this she continues to work in her discipline by teaching undergraduates and maintaining a research program.

The changes that she has seen in her leadership style include: being less direct with people and more patient, knowing that it is not possible to communicate enough and with the same consistency, listening more before making a decision, finding mentors to help her develop as a leader, being a better mentor to other people who want to develop, being less controlling and allowing others to do things for her, admitting when she has made the wrong decision and decides to change her mind since she has learned that no decision is final, and having goals and principles for each decision that are in align with the goals for the organization.

She said that University of Minnesota Extension priorities differ from the rest of the University in that they are largely set by other organizations and stakeholders so she needs to listen to their concerns before making decisions. The legislature has mandated an advisory committee in every county. There are also regional committees and a state-wide committee, as well as the 4-H

foundation. Her unit needs to direct programs to meet the needs of all of these stakeholder groups, but sometimes stakeholder priorities can clash with those of the University.

Q: As one of the few female deans, what, if anything, do you have to do differently?

A: For her profession, being female is not a new concept so she learned to be treated equally since she was young. However, in college, she was the first female graduate student in a class of 125 and then the first female extension employee in the state. She has learned not to act differently than the men when doing her job.

Q: You talked about competing demands between stakeholder and University needs. How do you reach a compromise or negotiate decisions between these groups?

A: She always talks about the common mission between the groups and what has already been accomplished. Then she sets a clear path on how to achieve the next objective. She believes in partnering to meet needs, presenting possible choices to solve the issue, and problem-solving together. She has a license to be creative with funding and work. Lastly, a positive attitude can be a key factor in decisions.

Q: How does your unit determine a process for needs and priorities?

A: Her unit takes pride on finding local solutions while keeping to the core mission of the University and basing decision in research. The challenge is moving extension from rural communities to underserved population bases. This is a changing demographic and can create tension between the historically-served groups and the new populations.

Q: As your unit has 200 P&A employees, what has led to the positive changes seen in scholarship and promotion?

A: Her unit has created a new promotion process to recognize excellence for P&A who have academic rank without tenure. It includes a vigorous scholarship process and peer review that is similar to the promotion and tenure process for faculty. P&A start at the assistant professor rank and after seven years need to have enough scholarship to move to the associate professor rank or they are not renewed.

Q: How do you define scholarship?

A: Scholarship includes articles in peer-reviewed professional journals, participation in national and regional organizations, and presentation of information to stakeholders. P&A are required to have a Masters' degree but many also have a Ph.D.

Members then thanked Dean Durgan for the discussion.

3. LIGHT RAIL TRANSPORTATION UPDATE

Bill Roberts said that there will be huge changes to campuses during and after light rail construction so his department is reaching out to make presentations to as many groups as possible. Much of the work is being done in conjunction with MetroTransit.

Sandra Cullen then walked the committee through a slide presentation on the light rail transit construction.

Q: What will happen to the University connector buses?

A: Work is still progressing on these routes as the buses will need to use 4th St/University Avenue and Pleasant Street. City buses will also be moved which amounts to 12,000 buses per day. The impact from these changes will be seen after classes end in May 2011.

Q: Will trips between East Bank and West Bank be free on the light rail?

A: No since a free fare zone is hard to enforce. Students who have the UPass will be able to use the light rail to commute between the two banks.

Q: What is the cost to the University from this project?

A: If the University wants something added to the design, then it will pay for these upgrades. These include a Washington Avenue Transit Mall and improved landscaping.

Q: What will be the impact on traffic?

A: New roads will be built this summer and updates will be made to other campus roads. Traffic will continue on Washington Avenue until the construction starts.

4. EMPLOYEE REWARDS, RECOGNITION, AND ACHIEVEMENT

Lori Ann Vicich from Human Resources joined the committee to discuss a study being done on employee rewards, recognition, and achievement. The University used to have a civil service/bargaining unit Staff Day which became an all-University Celebrate U Day this last year. A group was charged in January by Vice President Carrier to look at the practices at other institutions and corporations and to think outside the box.

This study is more important than ever since there is a correlation between pay decreases and work decreases. The University needs to keep employees engaged and morale high.

Input will be sought from a range of employees.

Q: Is the committee focused on the Twin Cities?

A: No. There is a representative from Morris on the committee and there will be a coordinate campus focus group to solicit information. The study is meant to be system-wide.

A representative said that this is an issue for the Duluth staff council.

Q: How will information on awards be solicited?

A: There are people on the working group who handle University awards. Information from department awards will also be sought.

Q: Is there P&A representation on the working group?

A: There are several P&A members on the working group.

Q: What will happen to staff day?

A: A determination has not yet been made.

5. ELECTIONS

Elections were held and the results were:

- Chair – Sarah Waldemar
- Chair-elect – Steven Pearthree
- Professional Development and Recognition Chair – Ann Hagen
- Representation and Governance Chair – Neil Anderson
- Benefits and Compensation Co-Chairs – Christine DeZelar-Tiedman and Sheryl Weber-Paxton
- Communications Co-Chairs – Travis Trautman and Mary Jetter
- Senators – Elaine Challacombe, Will Craig, Christine DeZelar-Tiedman, Frank Douma, Henry Fulda, Shawn Haag, Tatyana Shamliyan

6. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

Chair Waldemar said that the PULSE survey will start Monday. She urged P&A to respond as units make changes based on results to this survey.

7. APPROVAL OF MARCH 26 MINUTES

The March 26 minutes were approved as presented.

8. OTHER BUSINESS

Bill Roberts, a member of the Benefits Advisory Committee (BAC), said that at the last meeting the committee learned that the University has selected a new pharmacy benefits manager after an RFP. 79 percent of the recent comments on CVS Caremark were negative. The new manager will be Prime Therapeutics with specialty medications handled through Fairview Specialties. Both companies are based in the Twin Cities.

Chair Waldemar said that a new human resources policy affecting P&A is being proposed. She asked all P&A to send in their comments.

Joe Kelly from Human Resources said that fiscal stringency and fiscal emergency are both defined in the Tenure Code for faculty. Fiscal emergency is a drastic situation that has never been declared by the Regents. Fiscal stringency is used in times of University concern without extraordinary circumstances. According to the Tenure Code, it is declared by the President and approved by the Faculty Senate and the Regents.

The current P&A policy defines annual contracts and allows modifications only with appropriate notice. The only way to otherwise modify appointments is to issue all P&A a notice of non-renewal and then rehire them with a modified contract.

The proposed policy will define the situation for P&A and allow for a temporary reduction by the administration. Fiscal stringency needs to be declared for the entire system, not just for a select employee group.

Q: How will contract appointments be affected?

A: When a person's contract is renewed, the policy will be part of the new contract. The language will be included for all new contract appointments.

Q: Does this policy suspend the notice period for non-renewal notices?

A: No. If fiscal stringency is declared, there can be a temporary salary change without a notice period. The policy does not affect the notice period associated with programmatic changes.

Q: What are the time limitations for a ‘temporary time period’?

A: The Tenure Code allows for a time period of two years; this policy would follow those same time limits.

Q: How is this policy different from what is being done for this year?

A: This policy is what allows for the temporary salary reduction for this year. It needs to be in place by the contracts renewal date to implement the 1.15 percent reduction for this next year.

Q: For the postponed compensation clause, how long can this last?

A: The language is meant to be broad to handle a variety of circumstances, such as the six month delay in P&A merit increases for next year.

In closing Chair Waldemar again urged P&A to submit their comments on the proposed policy.

With no further business, Chair Waldemar thanked the members for attending and adjourned the meeting.

Becky Hippert
University Senate