

EQUITY, ACCESS & DIVERSITY  
MINUTES OF MEETING  
NOVEMBER 25, 2002

[In these minutes: Welcome and Call to Order, Men and Women's Athletics Department Merger Update, University-Wide Climate Survey Update, Diversity Minor Update, Career Enrichment Center Course Offerings, EAD Review Update]

[These minutes reflect discussion and debate at a meeting of a committee of the University of Minnesota Senate or Twin Cities Assembly; none of the comments, conclusions or actions reported in these minutes represent the views of, nor are they binding on, the Senate or Assembly, the Administration or the Board of Regents.]

PRESENT: Mary Lay, Chair, Beverly Balos, Stacey Aronson, Shezwae Fleming, Rose Blixt, Don Cavalier, Julie Sweitzer, Eric Burgess, Carol Chomsky, Margaret Moss, Jeffrey Roberts, Srilata Zaheer, Vanessa Bailey, Nena Fox, Cameron Bauer

REGRETS: Sallye McKee

ABSENT: Jacquelyn Zita

OTHER(S): Joas Petithomme

GUEST(S): Joel Maturi, Athletics Director; Karen Weaver, Associate Athletics Director

I). Professor Lay called the meeting to order and asked those present to introduce themselves.

II). Professor Lay welcomed guests, Director of Athletics, Joel Maturi, and Associate Athletics Director, Karen Weaver. To lay the groundwork, Professor Lay noted that EAD is responsible for making sure that women's issues remain visible and on the agenda at the University and asked Mr. Maturi and Ms. Weaver to provide the committee with a progress report on the merger of the men and women's athletics departments.

Mr. Maturi began by noting that prior to the merger, the University of Minnesota had two very separate, distinct athletics programs each with its own leadership, vision and mission. Because the culture of each of these entities was so deeply rooted and because change is always difficult, Mr. Maturi is now faced with an even greater challenge as Director of Athletics than he ever imagined. The unification of departments, personnel and facilities has and continues to create a significant amount of anxiety. In Mr. Maturi's opinion, the athletics department may potentially be overstaffed. Difficult decisions will have to be made. Decisions that will be in the best interest of the University and its athletics program but yet sensitive to the prospect that employees' livelihoods and/or responsibilities may be taken away.

Mr. Maturi promised the committee that the athletics merger would be completed by the end of the 2002 – 2003 academic year. To date, student athletes and coaches seem to have accepted the merger without much of a problem, but they are also the least affected and have benefited the most. Mr. Maturi is committed to having the student athlete be the center of the athletics department focus.

Mr. Maturi noted that he has inherited an outstanding staff of administrators, support personnel and coaches. Last year the University of Minnesota was rated the 7<sup>th</sup> best athletics program in America out of 350 Division 1 schools. Mr. Maturi explained that despite its ranking, the athletics program is still financially dependent upon the University and that responsibility needs to be lessened.

At the close of Mr. Maturi's presentation, the floor was opened up for questions and comments.

- A member asked Mr. Maturi to elaborate on the major differences between the men's and women's athletics departments. Mr. Maturi characterized the men's athletic department as operating on a collegiate, business model with an emphasis on the bottom-line and the marketing and promotions of its revenue generating sports. The women's program, on the other hand, functioned more as an educational model with an emphasis on accessibility and equitability. Mr. Maturi stressed that while neither of these models was necessarily right or wrong, in the end, because their missions were so diametrically opposed they failed to work together to resolve critical issues. Mr. Maturi is optimistic that the merger will lead to greater acknowledgment of both the men's and women's achievements and successes. Ms. Weaver supported Mr. Maturi's assessment and added that the merger was absolutely necessary in order for athletics to be successful. It became blatantly clear that the men and women's athletics program needed to work together in order to move the whole mission forward.
- The articulated reason for merging the departments was monetary savings and promises of equity. How can EAD stay involved and have input to ensure these assurances are kept? Mr. Maturi volunteered to report back to the committee on an annual or biannual basis and explain decisions and actions taken by the athletics department.
- The University has hired a consultant to work with the athletics department to develop a new mission statement, vision and long-range plan. Professor Lay requested that once these documents have been drafted, that they be shared with EAD.
- Professor Lay commented on a statement made earlier by Mr. Maturi concerning the fact that the athletics department has no minority representation on its administrative team and was wondering why. Mr. Maturi stated that he inherited his staff, and, unfortunately, cannot speak to yesterday. Mr. Maturi accepted this position with the intention of being 'around for the long haul' and although he cannot guarantee anything he would be surprised if in the not too distant future there would not be minority representation on the University's athletics administration. Ms. Weaver, the department's EEO representative, mentioned

that it has been a challenge in the search process to identify minority candidates. Oftentimes, departments hire individuals they already know rather than going out and actively increasing the pool of candidates.

- An EAD member stated that it is obvious there is a commitment is there to make the merger a success but are there processes in place to deal with the issues that arise out of having a merged department with different cultures, sensibilities and needs? Mr. Maturi has never worked in any other environment other than a merged environment. Hence, every decision he makes is based on what is best for the student athletes and program.
- A member asked what is the relationship between each campuses athletics department? Mr. Maturi is under the impression each department is completely separate but thinks it would be a good idea to meet one another and share and discuss issues. This member believes there should be coordination between the athletics programs on all campuses no matter what division they compete in. By doing so time could be spent problem solving and developing opportunities for improvement.

Mr. Maturi thanked the committee for their time and offered to return at their invitation. Members thanked Mr. Maturi and Ms. Weaver for the update.

Members took time to reflect on the presentation. A member recommended that Mr. Maturi report to the committee on a regular basis to monitor what is happening in the athletics department in terms of resources and equity issues. Consideration was given to inviting him back at the end of spring semester 2003 to get another update on what changes have been made, what direction the department is headed, where have resources gone, how much money has been saved by the merger, etc.

Professor Roberts suggested that a subcommittee of EAD be established and a petition made requesting that the subcommittee be allowed to meet with the consultant in order to relay the committee's concerns. Professor Lay volunteered to approach Mr. Maturi and Ms. Weaver with the possibility that EAD be involved in the consultation process. If it is agreeable, Professor Lay will send out an email looking for volunteers to serve on the subcommittee.

III). Professor Lay read an email from Vice President of Human Resources, Carol Carrier, responding to the EAD resolution recommending a regular survey of employee attitudes about the workplace be conducted. Vice President Carrier stated that the Department of Human Resources is working with faculty experts from the Carlson School to develop a biennial administrative survey of faculty and staff attitudes.

Julie Sweitzer, Director, Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action, provided the committee with an update on the University-wide climate survey. Ms. Sweitzer announced that since the last meeting the funding for the project has been secured, and the project will move forward. Survey topics will include questions on professional development, wellness, benefits, work/life issues, target questions focusing on particular

employee groups, etc. Topics and ideas are welcome and should be forwarded to Julie Sweitzer by the end of January 2003.

The plan is for this to be a web-based survey with a paper version available for those that prefer paper or do not have access to a computer. Although no final decision has been made, it appears that rather than surveying all employees a representative sampling of employees would be surveyed instead. Part of this decision is a result of concern over the 'survey exhaustion' recently experienced by students. Members tended to agree there is a value to surveying all employees rather than only a representative sampling. By surveying all employees the University is communicating that it cares about what each of its employees thinks individually.

Because the committee does not meet again until February 12, 2003 and Ms. Sweitzer does not have a definite timetable for this project, it was decided that once a draft survey has been produced it will either be shared with the committee as a whole or a subcommittee will be formed to review it.

IV). The investigation of the University into the possibility of offering a diversity or multi-cultural minor or degree program was postponed until the February 12, 2003 meeting. Ms. Sweitzer mentioned that the Disabilities Issues Committee has been working on trying to offer a disability minor and suggested that Professor Will Durfee be contacted to get more information on their progress.

Professor Chomsky added that she attended The Collaboration for the Advancement of College Teaching & Learning conference and one of the sessions she attended outlined the efforts undertaken by the College of St. Catherine in their attempt to develop a diversity major. Professor Chomsky offered this as a source of information on how to go about this process. In response, Vanessa Bailey stated that she was holding off on doing these sorts of investigative activities until she talks to someone internally at the University and knows how much work has already been done along these lines. Professor Chomsky noted that Professor Sharon Doherty, College of St. Catherine, would be a good resource person when the time is right to move forward on this project.

V). At the October 23, 2002 meeting Renee Dempsey, Senate staff, had been charged with collecting information on courses offered through the Career Enrichment Center. This information was distributed to members for their review. Besides the courses outlined in the handouts, Ms. Dempsey noted that the Career Enrichment Center would work with departments to create customized courses. Eric Burgess asked if there would be a charge for the customized courses. Ms. Dempsey stated that she would need to find out and let him know.

A continuation of discussion from the October 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting concerning the release time policy ensued. The disparity issue between supervisor's administration of this policy was disturbing to members. It was mentioned that maybe the current policy has too much room for interpretation. Professor Lay believes that this point should be addressed in the

climate survey in order to find out the availability to take advantage of the release time policy for professional growth opportunities.

VI). Professor Lay noted again that it is expected that EAD will be reviewed by the end of the 2002 – 2003 academic year. Ms. Dempsey, at the request of Professor Lay, secured a copy of the charge to the Equal Employment Opportunity for Women Committee, the committee that was absorbed by EAD and it was distributed to the committee for their review and information.

Professor Lay asked members if there was anything in the document distributed by H. Jeanie Taylor of the Office for University Women at the October 28<sup>th</sup> EAD meeting that stood out and that the committee would be interested in pursuing. Professor Lay believes that the recommendation to form a taskforce to explore the creation of an Equity Impact Assessment of New University Policies falls within the purview of EAD. As a starting point, Professor Roberts suggested that Vice President of Human Resources be asked how policies are implemented. Professor Chomsky added that EAD needs to be on the administration and other Senate committees' radar screens with respect to policy initiatives that have not yet come to fruition. Professor Lay suggested any further discussion concerning this issue or other items in the document be continued via email, and, in the meantime, she would talk with Julie Sweitzer about the Equity Impact Assessment statement.

VII). Hearing no further business, Professor Lay adjourned the meeting.

Renee Dempsey  
University Senate