
The University Senate

FACULTY • STUDENT • P&A • CIVIL SERVICE

2021-22 UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA University Senate Minutes: No. 6

Thursday, March 31, 2022
2:30 - 3:30 p.m.

The sixth meeting of the University Senate for 2021-22 was convened on March 31, 2022, online via Zoom, and was also live-streamed and recorded on [YouTube](#). At the time of this meeting, there were 261 voting members of the University Senate. 215 were present.

1. University Senate Call to Order

President Joan Gabel

2. President's Report

President Joan Gabel

President Gabel gave her report:

- Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic two years ago, the University has accomplished many things, including:
 - This fall, welcoming the largest, and most diverse, first generation, and Minnesotan systemwide class in decades
 - Increased the four-year graduation rate to the highest in 50 years
 - Exceeding \$1 billion in competitive R&D awards two years in a row for the first time in University history
 - Keeping tuition below the rate of inflation
 - Launching new innovative programs like NXT GEN MED, an exciting new collaboration with Google and Mayo Clinic, and the Future of Advanced Agricultural Research in Minnesota (FAARM), a state-of-the-art animal agriculture teaching and research complex in Mower County, which is poised as a catalyst to advance Minnesota's \$112 billion annual economic impact in the food and agriculture sector.
- Earlier this month, the University modified its indoor mask requirements, requiring masks only in classroom and instructional laboratory settings, healthcare settings, transit settings (as required by the Federal Transit Administration), and in settings where masks are required due to environmental or hazardous material conditions.
- Regarding senior leader searches:
 - Three competitive, national searches for key leadership positions at the University—Vice President for Equity and Diversity, Vice President for Research, and University of Minnesota Duluth Chancellor—are underway.

- The committees began meeting in January and listening sessions were conducted with key stakeholders to help inform the position profiles and search processes.
- Comprehensive recruiting efforts are taking place through March, with confidential, first-round interviews planned in April.
- Public interviews with the University community are slated to take place before the end of the semester.
- At the February Board of Regents meeting, the administration shared the work of the MSafe team and their efforts to guide implementation of Dr. Cedric Alexander's recommendations regarding public safety. The full list of MSafe recommendations is under review, and work on a number of these recommendations has already begun, including equipping UMPD officers with body cameras; incorporating a full-time social worker into the Department of Public Safety; and adopting the RAVE Guardian app.
- Also at the February Board of Regents meeting, the new Administrative Policy: *Namings and Renamings* was approved. The All-University Honors Committee is establishing a working group to finalize the committee's naming criteria as well as to work out outstanding operational issues.

3. Questions to the President

President Joan Gabel

Gabel first addressed a question that had been submitted in advance by Emily McGuire, student senator from the School of Public Health, asking what the administration could do to invest more support in the School of Public Health. McGuire noted that the School of Public Health's ranking had fallen out of the top ten in *U.S. News*' rankings. Given the nature of the question, Gabel asked Executive Vice President and Provost Rachel Croson to respond. Croson stated that given the high quality work done at the School of Public Health, she firmly believes it to be a top ten school, and that she is committed to making sure the School of Public Health receives support that allows it to excel.

Scott Petty, student senator from the College of Food, Agricultural and Natural Resource Sciences (CFANS), asked about the special Board of Regents meeting that had been scheduled concurrent with the present meeting, and asked whether there was anything on the agenda besides the century bond issue. He further asked that Gabel explain the issue. Gabel confirmed that it was only that item on the agenda, and explained that broadly speaking, a century bond is a long term debt that allows institutions with large resources and good credit to take advantage of positive market conditions and draw debt in the same way that bonds are issued for capital projects, but with much longer payback periods. She noted that the century bond was approved by the Board of Regents in February 2022, but since that meeting, a combination of Federal Reserve rate increases and geopolitical uncertainty has caused fluctuations in the financial markets. The meeting at hand was to address proposed amendments to the century bond program to increase flexibility in the type of debt issued, provide an interest rate target, clarify the intended purposes for the debt, and authorize additional underwriting syndicate members.

Grace Hiltner, Morris representative to the Student Senate Consultative Committee (SSCC), mentioned the referendum regarding a community public safety committee on the Twin Cities campus that was put to a vote through the All Campus Elections Commission, and passed with

82% support. Gabel said that the administration was currently reviewing recommendations, including this one, from the M Safe committee regarding public safety.

Mattea Allert, student senator from the College of Biological Sciences (CBS), brought up a private personnel issue related to her recent maternity leave, and asked the president her thoughts on the matter. Gabel indicated that she could not speak to the situation specifically, but encouraged Allert to reach out to Vice Provost and Dean for Graduate Education Scott Lanyon and/or the Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action office. She also offered to follow up with further resources.

Nicholas Wallenhorst, student senator from the College of Liberal Arts (CLA), asked what measures had been taken to support students from Ukraine. Gabel responded that all students, faculty, and staff from Ukraine, Russia, and Belarus had been contacted and provided information on resources and support available. The president expressed great sadness and concern about the situation in Ukraine, and said that International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) and the Global Programs and Strategy Alliance (GPS) had created websites with these resources. She added that the University and the Foundation had divested from Russia, and that the University is partnering with national organizations to provide protection to students and scholars who need it.

Jonathan Sachs, faculty senator from the College of Science and Engineering (CSE) asked whether there was any thought about retroactively addressing the pay cuts that took place during the pandemic or otherwise addressing compensation. Gabel responded that there were not plans specifically related to the pandemic-era pay cuts, but that there were plans for raises for faculty and staff in the budget, pending Board of Regents approval. She added that they are looking into increasing base pay for student employees and graduate assistants as well.

Sachs then referenced a news item about inflated numbers from Columbia University and asked whether the University is transparent or plans to increase transparency around how its numbers are reported. Gabel replied that the University had no reason or desire to be anything but transparent, adding that if there was a desire for a presentation to the senate, she could work with the staff in Institutional Reporting on that.

Carter Yost, CLA student senator, asked about the University's budget request to the state legislature for safety and security, what specifically the plans for those funds would be, and whether there would be consultation around allocation of those funds. Emphasizing that this was not an exhaustive list, Gabel responded that the list included increasing the size of the University of Minnesota Police Department (UMPD), increasing training for officers, adding lighting and cameras, as well as allowing for the continuation of the work of M Safe. She said that the Campus Safety Committee would be a large part of the consultative process, but definitely not the only avenue of consultation.

At this point, President Gabel announced that she needed to leave to attend a meeting of the Board of Regents, and turned chairing duties over to Professor Colleen Flaherty Manchester, Senate Consultative Committee (SCC) vice chair.

4. Introductions to the Senate

Dean Andrew Alleyne, College of Science and Engineering, and Dean Nisha Botchwey, Humphrey School of Public Affairs, were introduced to the senate.

5. Motion to Approve Special Rule (*Action by the University Senate*)

Professor Ned Patterson, chair, Senate Consultative Committee

The Senate Consultative Committee proposes the following special rule during this meeting:

- Speakers are limited to two minutes each time they are recognized.

The clerk will interject when speakers have thirty seconds left and when time is up.

A $\frac{2}{3}$ majority of those present and voting is required to approve the special rule.

Motion: To approve the special rule.

Approved.

6. Administrative Responses to University Senate Actions (*Information for the University Senate*)

- [Response](#) to Resolution on Caste-Based Discrimination
- [Response](#) to Ukraine Resolution (This resolution was passed at the Student Senate on February 28, 2022; it is included here because the University Senate endorsed a similar statement. Statements do not require administrative response.)

7. Tribute to Deceased Members of the University Community

Faculty/Staff

Karin Alaniz
Senior Lecturer
School of Nursing
University of Minnesota Twin Cities
1945-2021

Kathie Anderson
Admissions Interviewer
Boynton Health Service
University of Minnesota Twin Cities
1971-2022

Amos Deinard
Associate Professor
Medical School
University of Minnesota Twin Cities
1935-2022

Rose Garmer
Executive Secretary
College of Science and Engineering
University of Minnesota Twin Cities
1935-2021

James Parker
Teaching Specialist
College of Science and Engineering
University of Minnesota Twin Cities
1984-2022

Michele Quackenboss
IT Professional - Web Development/Design
School of Public Health
University of Minnesota Twin Cities
1970-2022

Herbert Scherer
Associate Professor
University Libraries
University of Minnesota Twin Cities
1930-2021

Students

Cathleen Leskey
University of Minnesota Crookston

Karimah Phuly
University of Minnesota Duluth

Jacob Schnoor
University of Minnesota Duluth

Tobiloba Taiwo
College of Biological Sciences
University of Minnesota Twin Cities

8. Approval of Minutes (*Action by the University Senate*)
Professor Rachna Shah, clerk, University Senate

Motion: To approve the minutes from the following meeting:

- [March 3, 2022](#)

Approved.

9. Provost's Report

Executive Vice President and Provost Rachel Croson

Croson provided the following updates:

- Masks will be required in classrooms through the end of the semester, but not at commencement ceremonies or other end of semester gatherings.
- Croson recently attended a conference in Washington D.C. on the future of faculty evaluations, including how to ensure that work such as community-engaged research and interdisciplinary work are valued.
- She presented recently to the Board of Regents around test optionality and the analysis around this year's incoming class, which was the first to enter without the testing requirement. She also presented on strategic enrollment. In May, she will report to the regents on faculty tenure and the work being done around non-tenure stream faculty.
- The Core Curriculum 2025 Committee has kicked off its work on recommending revisions to the liberal education requirements on the Twin Cities campus; a series of forums will be held in the near future to gather input on the subject, and this will be a topic of discussion at the next University Senate meeting.
- The Senate Committee on Educational Policy (SCEP) and the Student Academic Integrity Committee (SAIC) asked Provost Croson to form a task force to look at the research around privacy and ethics related to online learning tools, specifically but not limited to online proctoring systems. That task force will be convened in the near future.
- The University is preparing for its next accreditation cycle, and will be naming mental health as the quality initiative for this cycle.
- There are several leadership searches on the horizon, including deans of the School of Public Health and the Carlson School of Management, a permanent vice provost for public engagement, and a new position to oversee distributed learning. Finally, positions for three 25% or 50% fellows to work on initiatives (non-tenure track faculty, faculty leadership development, and the promotion, evaluation, and tenure process) in the Office of the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs will be posted in the near future.

10. Questions to the Provost

Executive Vice President and Provost Rachel Croson

In follow up to Mattea Allert's question to the president earlier, Scott Petty asked the provost's thoughts on graduate students going on maternity leave, specifically regarding the responsibility for their support during their leave in terms of centrally versus grant funded positions. Croson answered that she was not aware of the specifics of the situation or the relevant policies, but that she was glad to be involved in future discussions to ensure that the University's policies are appropriate and are being implemented appropriately.

Siya Sakhardande, CLA student senator, asked to hear more about test optionality, and whether that data would be shared. Croson said that since the data is very preliminary at this point, she would like to continue the pilot through fall 2023, as well as look at benchmarking to learn about the implications of test optionality, particularly related to student success. She offered to share the data with those interested but asked that it not be shared broadly, due to the fact that it is very preliminary.

11. Senate Consultative Committee Report

Professor Ned Patterson, chair, Senate Consultative Committee

Professor Ned Patterson, chair, Senate Consultative Committee (SCC), provided the following updates:

- The general education curriculum will be on the agenda for the April 21, 2022 University Senate meeting.
- A group is working on revising the University Senate Constitution, Bylaws, and Rules, and presented it to the SCC recently, with the intent to bring the revisions to the full senate in the fall.
- The SCC is looking at issues of compensation, including employee total compensation, the undergraduate minimum wage, and graduate student stipends.
- The resolution on graduate student fees that was discussed at the March 3, 2022 meeting of the Faculty Senate was referred to the SCC for further consultation due to concerns from the Council of Graduate Students (COGS), the Council of International Graduate Students (CIGS), and members of the administration.

12. Faculty Legislative Liaison Report

Professor Rob Blair, faculty legislative liaison

Professor Rob Blair, faculty legislative liaison, reported that the legislative session this year has been interesting, given the budget surplus and the redistricting effort. He reported that it was the ninth week of the session, and last week the committees looked through all of their bills. Any that were not forwarded will not be considered this session. Committees are now reviewing the bills that were forwarded.

Legislators are considering how to spend (or not) the surplus of \$9.3 billion. Republicans have proposed returning all of it to taxpayers; democrats have proposed using it for K-12 education, public safety, pandemic pay relief, and child care benefits.

The University's budget request has received multiple hearings. State House and Senate leadership will soon provide their budget targets to the committees, and the committees will decide what bills get what money. There are unlikely to be any bonding recommendations until the end of April.

Blair said that he and Professor Donna Spannaus-Martin would like to hear from faculty regarding the need for infrastructure improvements and upkeep, as well as about the impact of the pandemic on faculty's ability to do their jobs, specifically related to attrition due to noncompetitive compensation, and increased workload due to attrition. He encouraged people to reach out with personal stories, and/or to contact their legislators directly.

13. Old Business

None

14. New Business

None

15. University Senate Adjournment

Professor Flaherty Manchester adjourned the meeting at 3:33 p.m.

Amber Bathke

University Senate Office