

SENATE COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL CONCERNS
MINUTES OF MEETING

September 26, 2011

Morrill Hall Room 238A

[In these minutes: committee orientation; committee responsibility regarding university investments; national college health improvement project - learning collaborative on high risk drinking]

[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 represent the views of, nor are they binding on, the Senate, the Administration or the Board of Regents.]

PRESENT: Dave Golden (chair), Timothy Sheldon, Teresa Schicker, Michael O'Day, Sandra Krebsbach, Ahmed Heikal, Kaari Nelson, John Broadhurst, Stephen Gross, Amelious Whyte, David Fuhs

REGRETS: Rebecca von Dissen, Kim Robien, Elizabeth Ault, Michael Sommers, Carol Foth, Lizzy Shay, Maria Hanratty, Susan Cable Morrison,

ABSENT: Rebecca Shankle, Leah Iverson

GUESTS: Dana Farley, associate program director, Boynton Health Services; Anthony Quill, investment analyst, Office of Investments and Banking

Dave Golden called the meeting to order, and asked committee members to introduce themselves and state why they were interested in the committee. Kaari Nelson noted she was leaving the University and introduced her replacement, Anthony Quill, investment analyst, Office of Investments and Banking.

Committee Orientation

Mr. Golden reviewed the committee charge and noted issues the committee had previously considered such as disaster relief, good working environments for faculty and staff, fair trade coffee, and the Mount Graham Telescope project. He noted the committee functions in an advisory capacity and may conduct open forums, issue statements, and pass resolutions. The committee is also charged with reviewing the University's investments that have shareholder resolutions that "should be of concern to the University."

Dawn Zugay, committee specialist, University Senate Office, provided the committee with an overview of the University Senate governance structure and the committee's role. Her presentation included:

- Organization of the University Senate and its committees
- Role of committee members
 - General and ex officio

- Committee options for action including: statements, resolutions, and creation or amendment of policies
- Process for bringing a resolution from a Senate committee to the University Senate

Mr. Golden next reviewed the committee's work in 2010-11. And noted that the University Dining Service had taken action on an issue discussed by the committee. It will now provide point of sale caloric information at its on campus food service locations. Mr. Golden went on to discuss potential agenda topics for 2011-12 including:

- Implementing a Smart Grid on the Twin Cities campus
- The impact of the Light Rail Transit construction on local businesses and the University
- Forming a subcommittee to research whether the University should begin investing in Sudan again in light of recent political changes in that country
- Considering whether to support the Student Health Advisory Committee's (SHAC) recommendation for a smoke free campus
- Receiving an update on changes to transgender benefits in the Student Health Benefit Plan
- Actions to support the National College Health Improvement Project (NCHIP) – Learning Collaborative on High Risk Drinking

Mr. Golden provided the committee with a copy of SHAC's resolution and letter to President Eric Kaler requesting him to consider implementing a tobacco-free campus policy in the interest of public health. He also provided the committee with background on the 2009 efforts to implement a tobacco-free campus under President Bruininks. Mr. Golden asked that the committee review the materials and at a future meeting consider whether to support SHAC's resolution and possibly bring a similar resolution to the University Senate.

Mr. Golden asked Ms. Schicker to follow up on her early contacts with individuals working on the Smart Grid, and determine if they would be willing to speak with the committee.

Committee Responsibility Regarding University Investment

Mr. Golden's request for a subcommittee to research whether the University should begin investing in Sudan again in light of recent political changes in that country spurred committee discussion about tying investment decisions to human rights concerns, and the impact on individuals living in countries where disinvestment occurs. Mr. Quill stated that direct investments could be reviewed, but he noted the difficulty and expense of tracking co-mingled funds such as index funds. The committee determined that the subcommittee charge should be broader than reviewing investment in Sudan. Instead, it should review the University's investments in countries where there are human rights violations. Mr. Quill, Sandra Krebsbach, and Michael O'Day volunteered to participate in the subcommittee. Teresa Schicker volunteered to ask fellow public policy students to research which countries the University invests in where there are human rights violations.

National College Health Improvement Project (NCHIP) - Learning Collaborative on High Risk Drinking

Mr. Golden briefly described NCHIP and the University of Minnesota's involvement. He stated the University is participating with 32 other schools from around the country in a one-and-half year process to reduce the binge-drinking rate and the average number of negative consequences experienced by students by 20% in the next three years. He then introduced Dana Farley, associate program director, Boynton Health Services who provided the committee with further information on NCHIP. Mr. Farley provided the committee with a document describing the collaborative's vision, the University of Minnesota's "aim statement" and Spring 2010 data on the negative consequences due to alcohol use. Some of the negative consequences noted were:

- Having a hangover
- Performing poorly on a test or important project
- Being in trouble with the police, residence hall or college authorities
- Missing class
- Being arrested for DWI and
- Being hurt or injured

He also pointed out the estimated total annual cost of alcohol for the University of Minnesota, not including injuries or mental health issues was \$1,512,000. Sherry Gray asked what percentage of University students are "high risk" drinkers. Mr. Farley responded that a survey of degree seeking graduate and undergraduate students showed about 37.5% had engaged in high-risk drinking in the last two weeks. The committee discussed the methodology and reliability of the survey. Mr. Farley noted that there was a large survey group, the survey was repeated over time, and the University's results were similar to those of other Big Ten campuses.

Mr. Farley also discussed the collaborative's approach for reducing high-risk drinking. The first phase is to focus on the individual by taking steps to identify at-risk individuals, addressing acute alcoholic toxicity, and implementing effective prevention. As part of the focus on the individual drinker, Boynton Health service is screening students for high-risk drinking behaviors. The second phase will focus on the environment and third on the system. Mr. Farley noted one environmental area where the Social Concerns Committee could have an impact is on supporting actions to eliminate easy access to alcohol. He noted the University's recent support in the enforcement of social host ordinances in the areas surrounding the campus. Some other issues he suggested the committee could look into regarding alcohol accessibility are:

- Alcohol licensing in Dinkytown
- Bar density in the community surrounding the University
- Opposing the Athletic Department's request for an alcohol license for Oak Street
- An Alcohol excise tax in the area surrounding the University
- Insuring alcohol companies do not sponsor advertisements in the stadium

Amelious Whyte, chief-of-staff, Office of Student Affairs noted that the University has a policy against sponsorship by alcohol companies.

Mr. Golden stated the committee would consider how to approach the issue at its October meeting. He asked the committee to suggest additional agenda topics. David Fuhs, suggested the committee consider students' increasing use of prescription ADHD drugs to assist in studying and taking exams. Mr. Golden stated that the number of prescriptions for ADHD drugs has tripled at Boynton Health Services. Other committee members commented on the ease of access to these drugs. Committee members agreed that this topic should be added to the agenda.

Hearing no further business, Mr. Golden adjourned the meeting.

Dawn Zugay
University Senate Office