

CLASSROOM ADVISORY SUBCOMMITTEE  
MINUTES OF MEETING  
APRIL 6, 2009

[In these minutes: Classroom Planning Resolution, Unplaced Courses for Fall 2009 Decline, Active Learning Classroom Update, Classroom Support Unit Update/Report, Mobile Computing Initiative]

[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: Thomas Michaels, chair, Michael Hannon, Steve Fitzgerald, Linda Jorn, Jeffrey Lindgren Priscilla Cushman, William Gleason, Jay Hatch, Jean King, Kathrin Hahn, James Hambleton

REGRETS: Jeffrey Hammer, Michael Berthelsen, Nikolai Kleven

ABSENT: Roberta Juarez, Keya Ganguly, Kelsey Eide

GUEST: Toni Pangborn, Office of Classroom Management

OTHERS ATTENDING: Mike Garza

I). Professor Michaels called the meeting to order and welcomed all those present.

II). Professor Michaels stated that this committee deals not only with learning spaces, but pedagogy as well. The Educause reading that he had requested members look at prior to today's meeting, points out the importance of how these issues need to be driven forward with synergy. Mobile computing in particular, noted Professor Michaels, is one area where learning spaces, technology, and pedagogy come together.

III). Professor Michaels reported that with the events of the Graduate School this past month, he and Gary Engstrand in the Senate Office have not had an opportunity to rewrite the classroom planning resolution. The Senate Committee on Educational Policy (SCEP) has requested that text be added to address the issue of integrating teaching, classroom, and office spaces.

Professor Michaels reported on a conversation he had with Professor Judith Martin, chair, Senate Committee on Finance and Planning. In response to a question about the process for planning new buildings with classroom spaces such as the Science Teaching and Student Services (STSS) building, Professor Martin indicated that there is no formal process given that the University rarely builds new classroom buildings. Professor Michaels shared with Professor Martin the Classroom Advisory Subcommittee's (CAS) interest in being central to discussions that take place around planning new classroom

buildings and classroom spaces. Professor Martin suggested approaching the Faculty Consultative Committee (FCC) to discuss this further. In turn, Professor Michaels reported having a conversation with Professor Emily Hoover, chair, FCC, about involving CAS when new classroom buildings are being planned. Professor Michaels volunteered to keep the committee informed about what Professor Hoover does with this request.

A member stated that not only should CAS have input into new classroom building plans, but into classroom renovations as well.

IV). Steve Fitzgerald, director, Office of Classroom Management (OCM), reported that a tremendous amount of progress has been made in terms of minimizing the number of unplaced courses for fall 2009. Currently, there are approximately 200 unplaced courses for fall '09. Normally at this time, it would not be uncommon to have 600 – 700 unplaced courses.

A lot of work has gone into minimizing non-standard courses because they impact the efficiency of scheduling, and make it difficult for students to access courses, which impacts graduation, etc. The number of meeting patterns, noted Mr. Fitzgerald, at the University is astronomical. This is an impediment to course access for students. It has long been discussed that if the University did a better job of enforcing its scheduling policies and guidelines that opportunities would open up the scheduling rubric, and, as a result, by minimizing non-standard courses, etc., OCM will be piloting in fall 2009 and spring 2010 additional B time scheme (75 minute, 3 credit courses) slots in the schedule for days other than just Tuesdays/Thursdays. This progress is the result of the collective efforts of a lot of people across the University.

Mr. Fitzgerald stated that KARE 11 recently did an active learning t.v. spot. He reported meeting with the Academy of Distinguished Teachers last week where a lot of the discussion was focused on the active learning classroom.

Professor Michaels asked by what percentage were the number of non-standard courses reduced. Mr. Fitzgerald stated that this number will be available, and he will share this information with the committee when it becomes available.

V). Professor Michaels welcomed Toni Pangborn from the Office of Classroom Management who was invited to provide the committee with information on classroom support provided through OCM. Ms. Pangborn noted that the Classroom Support Unit focuses on sharing information with classroom users and coordinating problem resolutions in classrooms. A handout to supplement Ms. Pangborn's presentation was distributed to members.

Ms. Pangborn turned members' attention to a series of charts and graphs containing customer service data and incident activity for fall 2008 for the Classroom Support Hotline. She spent time walking members through the data depicted in the charts and

graphs, e.g., call types, first call resolutions. Ms. Pangborn noted that the Classroom Support Hotline maintains between a 24% - 30% first contact resolution.

A member asked whether each faculty member is responsible for knowing how to use the technology in his/her classroom. Ms. Pangborn noted that faculty need to know how to use their own laptop computer and how to interface the technology in the classroom with their computer. It is OCM's responsibility to make sure the technology in the room is working. OCM provides training sessions to faculty on how to use classroom technology. In addition, there are links on the OCM website that explain in detail how to use the technology too. OCM works hard to develop strong relationships with staff in the colleges who provide educational support services to faculty. Ms. Pangborn stated that the vast majority of escalated problem incidents are resolved in 0 – 1 days. The average time from initial contact to issue resolution is 1.2 days.

Does the Classroom Support Hotline have to deal with a lot of angry callers asked a member? Early on, before OCM had a high number of technology-equipped rooms, the Classroom Support Hotline staff would get its share of angry callers. Now, however, those types of calls are down significantly.

Is there a way to avoid classroom renovation-related complaints asked a member? Ms. Pangborn stated that OCM works hard to communicate about classroom renovation projects that are taking place on campus, e.g., Folwell Hall. OCM also maintains relationships with its contractors, and, when necessary, will call contractors to ask them to minimize noise, etc. Steve Fitzgerald added that there is an extensive amount of coordination and communication between Facilities Management (FM), Capital Planning and Project Management (CPPM), and OCM relative to projects and work in general. Every effort is made to mitigate and minimize project/work-related issues to the extent possible. Ideally, noted Ms. Pangborn, she would like the University to have swing rooms in order to be able to move a class to a nearby space when work is taking place that is disruptive to a class.

A faculty member suggested faculty that use technology should have a backup in the event a problem arises.

Moving on, Ms. Pangborn shared results from the fall 2008 Classroom Satisfaction Survey. This survey was developed to gauge overall classroom satisfaction by measuring satisfaction with specific room components or attributes. The survey data provides OCM with the information it needs to identify potential opportunities for improvement. The anonymous survey was sent to all faculty/instructor of record asking only that the building and room be identified. The response rate for this survey was 25.6% (2,258 invitations to complete the survey were extended and 577 faculty responded) – 81% of the rooms had at least one response. Next, Ms. Pangborn walked members through the survey results.

A member encouraged Ms. Pangborn to not only correlate the survey results from year to year, but to strive to get the response rate higher. Another member asked what is being

done to incent faculty to respond to the survey. Ms. Pangborn stated that the survey explains that the results will be used for classroom planning.

How can students voice an opinion about a particular classroom or report a problem in a room asked a member? Mr. Fitzgerald stated that students' feedback is solicited. The student voice and what happens in classrooms is very important. OCM is always open to hearing about additional ideas for capturing student input. Ms. Pangborn added that to report problems in a classroom, e.g., broken chair, they should also call the Classroom Support Hotline. A student member suggested installing phones with signage in the halls that students can use to report problems. Alternatively, a faculty member suggested putting a link on myU Portal that students can click on to report problems. Ms. Pangborn agreed these are good ideas, but noted that staffing is an issue for OCM.

In closing, Mr. Fitzgerald highlighted the many constructive and positive comments that the Classroom Support Unit receives.

VI). The last item on the agenda, noted Professor Michaels, is a continued discussion regarding the University's mobile computing initiative. Professor Michaels raised the question that in terms of mobile technology, should the University suggest types of computers that students should bring, or should the University look at providing students with a small type of netbook (also referred to as a mini notebook)?

Mr. Fitzgerald gave credit to OIT for unfolding the mobile computing initiative at the University. Many schools throughout the country are providing, or subsidizing some sort of computing device for students. With this said, he hopes that the University would do the same. The University needs to be asking itself from a resource and management perspective how it can get to the point where students carry this type of mobile technology with them. Linda Jorn added that on Monday, April 15, OIT is sponsoring a mobile initiative to talk about mobile technology broadly. She volunteered to bring a summary of this meeting to the Classroom Advisory Subcommittee in the future.

Members spent time discussing the mobile technology issue, and the following comments were made:

- From a student perspective, the University should avoid mandating specific mobile technology, and give students a choice of options that will work on campus.
- The University should make high school students aware of its mobile technology recommendations early on so potential students can avoid having to make additional technology purchases.
- The University should support the Linux operating system in addition to Windows and Macintosh.
- The University needs to think long-term when it comes to mobile technology; it cannot afford to be shortsighted.

In light of time, Professor Michaels thanked the committee for its thoughtful discussion around mobile technology, and noted that this discussion would be continued.

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

Renee Dempsey  
University Senate