

CLASSROOM ADVISORY SUBCOMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MEETING
NOVEMBER 15, 2001

[In these minutes: Welcome, Update on Facilities Management initiatives, PowerPoint presentation by Steve Fitzgerald of Classroom Management on the Twin Cities Classroom Supply, Demand and Utilization Issues, Joint Meeting Between CAS and The Academy of Distinguished Teachers, Update on Accessibility of Information Technology Policy, Curriculum Transformation and Technology 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: Denise Guerin, Steve Fitzgerald, Bobbi Cordano, Steve Spehn

REGRETS: Steve Sperber, Jane Phillips, Bill Hanson

OTHERS: Nancy McGlynn

I). Update on Facilities Management initiatives that were discussed at the October 2001 meeting:

- Classroom Management provided input to Facilities Management on the Facilities Condition Assessment Project. The purpose of the Facilities Condition Assessment Project is to identify physical facility deficiencies throughout the Twin Cities and coordinate campuses. An RFP to identify vendors that can assist with this initiative will be sent out next week.
- Classroom Management is regularly participating in the new training initiative for custodial trainees.

II). Steve Fitzgerald of Classroom Management delivered a PowerPoint slide presentation to the Committee on Twin Cities Classroom Supply, Demand and Utilization Issues. The same presentation was given to the Senate Committee on Educational Policy (SCEP) on October 24, 2001. The excerpt from those minutes follow:

Steve Fitzgerald said his purpose is to provide “an informational update” and to “foster a dialogue on important issues regarding this critical teaching and learning” resource. The report was produced by the Office of Classroom Management. The Power Point is available to all committee members.

Mr. Fitzgerald said he was worried about the trend in unplaced courses; if the Architecture remodeling is not completed on time, they may face a problem they cannot fix. He noted that the Fall 2002 schedule will be set in November so prompt action is needed to reduce the number of unplaced courses.

There are essential elements for solving the problem: departments and colleges must exercise discipline in setting the Fall 2002, schedule, by using standard start and end times, minimizing peak-time requirements, using Mondays and Fridays more, more accurately projecting enrollment and course technology needs, and by managing course submissions. His office, in turn, will work with schedulers to improve efficiency in classroom use.

This issue will be brought to the Deans' Council, Mr. Fitzgerald said, as well as to departments and associate deans. Key committees, such as this one, will also be informed. There will also be a meeting for all schedulers in early November to review the Fall 2002, schedule in detail.

For the longer term, his office is working with the Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost: to start a review of scheduling policy; to begin data collection and analysis of departmental classroom utilization; on how best to identify and act on future classroom needs of colleges; and how best to keep deans and the Provost informed about results of efforts to improve classroom use. Critical next actions include support from deans in adherence to policy, working closely with departments to improve classroom utilization, and develop an improved schedule for Fall 2002, and beyond. In addition, Mr. Fitzgerald urged that the Committee take a position; he said he would welcome the support.

Professor Guerin thanked Mr. Fitzgerald for his very succinct presentation on this very critical issue, and went on to comment that she is concerned that many faculty are totally unaware of the Standard Classroom Scheduling Policy.

Bobbi Cordano added that she is concerned by some of the language in the presentation that might put faculty and students on the defensive rather than invoking support for this issue. Mr. Fitzgerald stressed that the goal of Classroom Management is to be responsive to the needs of both faculty and students. Ms. Cordano wants to make sure that the language used in these presentations is consistent and conducive to getting the buy-in, commitment, and allies to drive this initiative.

Mr. Fitzgerald mentioned that the Senate Consultative Committee (SCC) has taken a very strong stand on this issue and acknowledges the need to enforce the Classroom Scheduling Policy.

Ms. Cordano asked if Classroom Management is offering incentives to schedule at off-peak times. Mr. Fitzgerald offered technology upgraded classrooms as one example, but in order to offer this as an incentive funding for the Technology Upgrade Program needs to continue.

III). Election of a Chair was deferred until a time when more Committee members would be present.

IV). Professor Guerin, a member of the Academy of Distinguished Teachers as well as its Twin Cities Steering Committee, stated that the Academy's Steering Committee put out a request to all Twin City Academy members to solicit their input on initiatives that should be addressed this year, and the following classroom management issues were at the top of the list:

- Classroom Technology Upgrade Plan
- Student Recruitment and Retention. Using the technologically upgraded classrooms as a recruitment tool for enrolling high ability students.

The Steering Committee requested that the Classroom Advisory Subcommittee meet with them in January 2002 to discuss how the two groups can work together on classroom management issues. One key issue that was mentioned was the need to change the budgeting process since currently no tuition dollars are spent on classrooms. The Academy wants to know how they can support the entire classroom initiative that would include facilities issues and the technology upgrade plan. The Academy's role could be to communicate to both faculty and students the problem surrounding classroom management issues, and, secondly, to address the student recruitment and retention issue. Professor Guerin requested that Mr. Fitzgerald, during the joint meeting in January of the Academy of Distinguished Teachers and the Classroom Advisory Subcommittee, speak to the following questions:

- How does a department give dollars and get priority scheduling in central classrooms?
- How is the priority for the course schedule determined?
- How does a department, like English, that utilizes large classrooms and offers technology enhanced teaching get priority?
- Address the "shades & wasps" issue. This issue is really a facilities matter related to substandard spaces.

Mr. Fitzgerald agreed to speak to these classroom management issues and commented that there is a logical and potentially very important special relationship between classrooms and the Academy. The Academy recognizes expertise, excellence and dedication in teaching and learning, and that teaching and learning occur in classrooms. The Academy could be an important voice for faculty in this effort.

V). Other Business:

A). Ms. Cordano updated the Committee on a Disabilities Services initiative, the Accessibility of Information Technology Policy. It is hoped that this policy will be passed within a year. In the meantime, Disabilities Services has been aggressively educating groups on this topic, and has created a website that offers tools on how to create an accessible website.

B). Ms. Cordano announced that Disabilities Services has been involved in a very successful grant effort called Curriculum Transformation and Technology. It was

recently announced that the federal government, through the Department of Education, will give another \$6-\$7 million dollars to continue this universal design curriculum work. While the RFP has not yet come out there is a hope that there will be the possibility of incorporating some classroom design efforts into this grant.

With no further business, Professor Guerin adjourned the meeting.

Renee Dempsey
University Senate