

2019-20 UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

University Senate Minutes: No. 4

Faculty Senate Minutes: No. 4

Special Meeting

Monday, June 1, 2020

2:00 - 4:00 P.M.

The fourth meeting of the University Senate and the Faculty Senate for 2019-20 was convened at 2:00 p.m. on June 1, 2020, online via Zoom, and was also live-streamed and recorded on [YouTube](#). This special meeting was called to address the topic of the death of George Floyd, as well as University financial stringency related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Present were 19 academic professional members, 13 civil service members, 152 faculty/academic professional members, and 22 student members. President Joan Gabel presided.

President Joan Gabel called the meeting to order and asked for a moment of silence for George Floyd.

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

Professor Amy Pittenger, 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.

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

The clerk will interject when speakers are at one minute left, thirty seconds left, and when time is up.

Motion: To approve the special rule.

Approved.

2. Statement on the Events Surrounding the Death of George Floyd (*Action by the University Senate*)

Professor Teddie Potter, chair, Equity, Access, and Diversity Committee

Gabel turned the floor over to Professor Teddie Potter, chair, Equity, Access, and Diversity Committee (EAD), who began by acknowledging the deep pain, fear, and anger of many people related to the wrongful death of George Floyd. She also acknowledged the deep pain, fear, and anger of people of color for whom these emotions are all too familiar, and said that any actions aiming to address patterns of sustained institutionalized racism and inequities and disparities have fallen far short of offering a transformative solution. She then opened up the floor for discussion on the statement below.

Statement on the Events Surrounding the Death of George Floyd

The University Senate condemns the death of George Floyd at the hands of (former) Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin, while three other Minneapolis police officers did not intervene despite Mr. Floyd's urgent cries that he could not breathe. We grieve with Mr. Floyd's family and loved ones, and with the wider community. George Floyd's death was unnecessary and preventable.

The committee wishes to recognize the courage and strength of a number of our local leaders:

- We celebrate the courage and conviction of Minnesota Student Association President Jael Kerandi for composing a candid, powerful [letter and petition](#), calling for the University of Minnesota to sever ties with the Minneapolis Police Department (MPD). The petition gathered over 2,000 signatures in one day and continues to gather support.
- We applaud University of Minnesota President Joan Gabel's leadership and swift and decisive action to limit the University's collaboration with the MPD, in accordance with the wishes of the University community as expressed in this petition.
- We appreciate the quick and heartfelt supportive response of many other University community members and organizations.
- We commend the swift action of MPD Chief Medaria Arradondo in terminating the employment of the officers involved.
- We commend Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey for calling for the officer involved to be arrested and charged.
- We applaud the organizers of the peaceful protests, who in the midst of their anger and pain, called for participants to wear masks and practice social distancing. We applaud the people of all walks of life who came out to peacefully protest this grotesque injustice. We also acknowledge that civil disobedience may, and in this case is indeed required to transform systems of oppression. We applaud those on the front lines of that transformative work.

Although we are heartened by the response of many of our leaders, we know there is still so much to be done:

- We urge members of the Police Officers Federation of Minneapolis to recall the organization's president, Lieutenant Bob Kroll, who [continued to promote "warrior-style" training](#) after Mayor Frey [banned this type of training](#) in Minneapolis.
- We urge the Minneapolis Police Department institute residential requirements so that our communities can be policed by professionals that live in our communities; institute testing and training of all members of the police force on implicit bias and race relations; and provide full transparency and reporting on racial disparities in traffic stops, arrests, policy use of force, arraignments and bail setting, plea bargaining, and sentencing
- We demand that Community Review Boards are fully funded and staffed and have the authority to recommend suspensions or firing of officers with multiple complaints.

- We call on the University president to create a task force of students, staff, and faculty to review current institutional responses and to provide recommendations to address the issue of racism at the University and the society at large.
- We call on the University to continue to use its platform to support those who are marginalized, to uplift their voices, and to fight against bias and injustice on and around its five campuses, and throughout the State of Minnesota. This may be in the form of additional funding for programs supporting underrepresented student groups, increased support for publicly engaged scholarship, additional outreach in marginalized communities, changes in curriculum, etc.
- We call on all people to resist complacency: speak out against anti-blackness and other forms of racism; confront those who espouse racist beliefs; and use their privilege to do the work necessary to deconstruct institutionalized and systemic racism.
- We as a University accept our responsibility as an institution of higher education to shift cultural and societal norms around our institutions. We reject the notion that violence is a prerequisite for public safety and commit to exploring alternative avenues for community safety and wellbeing.
- We express our sympathy and concern about small business owners and community members whose livelihoods and homes have been destroyed by vandalism and fires.

The fight for equity and inclusion in our state and communities is everybody's everyday work. We must continue to work together to change the systems that perpetuate racism, bigotry, and inequality in our communities. The Equity, Access, and Diversity Committee commits to being an instrument in executing the changes outlined.

Approved by the Equity, Access, Diversity Committee on May 30, 2020

Motion: To adopt the statement.

Greta Friedemann-Sánchez, faculty senator, offered the following amendments on behalf of School of Public Affairs faculty:

- Add: Advocate for residential requirements so that our community can be policed by professionals that live in our communities
- Add: Demand that community review boards are fully funded and staffed and have the authority to recommend suspensions or firing of officers with multiple complaints
- Add: Institute testing and training of all members of the police force on implicit bias and race relations
- Add: Provide full transparency and reporting on racial disparities in traffic stops, arrests, police use of force arraignment and bail setting plea bargaining and sentencing.

Amendments accepted.

Tabitha Greer-Reid, faculty senator from the College of Education and Human Development (CEHD), commented that a very specific way that institutional racism is played out at the University is that student cultural centers with dedicated space and professional staff for Black students, Asian/Pacific Islander students, and Latinx students have been erased. First they were

moved to the outer edges of campus—literally on the margins physically—and then they were all subsumed into the Multicultural Center for Academic Excellence (MCAE). While acknowledging that MCAE is a very important space for students, Greer-Reid said that it is also an active erasure, and stressed that the institutional response needs to dedicate resources, space, and staff to supporting the racial and cultural identities of minority students who are underrepresented, so that these students have a place to find support and resources for their lived experience, daily realities, emotional pain, and nuanced collective identities. She offered a formal amendment to add “including specific cultural resource centers reflective of specific racial identities as part of the list in the 6th bullet point in the second section. Amendment accepted.

Kevin Wendt, P&A Senator from the College of Science & Engineering (CSE), moved to strike the (original) sixth bullet, thanking Hennepin County Attorney Mike Freeman for arresting and charging Derek Chauvin with murder, and to change the word “offer” to “promote” regarding warrior style training in the first bullet point in the second section. Amendment accepted.

David Andow, faculty senator from the College of Food, Agricultural and Natural Resource Sciences (CFANS) moved to add “leadership” before “swift and decisive action” in the second bullet point in the first section. Amendment accepted.

Amy Ma, Student Senate chair, thanked EAD for crafting the statement and acknowledged a statement would never be perfect or sufficient to address the pain and anger of the community. She thanked Black activists for their mental, emotional, and physical energy as folks who have been doing this work for decades. She called on everyone to do better and hold themselves accountable to more than what is in this statement. She then said that she would like to see stronger language around MPD and nearby police departments, including increased community accountability that critically examines the ways the University has failed students, and informed members that students were drafting a resolution around disarmament and defunding of the UMPD. Finally, she moved to strike “we advocate against rioting and looting” from the last bullet point. Protests are not meant to be peaceful, commented Ma, and the University should not tell Black communities how to feel, protest, heal, or mourn. Amendment accepted.

Isaiah Ogren, student senator from the College of Liberal Arts (CLA) echoed Ma’s sentiment that UMPD needs to reevaluate its relationships with all local police departments. He called for a conversation about demilitarization and disarmament of UMPD and said he had drafted a resolution to this effect and would be circulating it to the entire senate. He then moved to add to the last bullet of the first section: “We also acknowledge that civil disobedience may, and indeed in this case is, required to transform systems of oppression” and insert in the second section a bullet: “We as a university accept our role in shifting cultural normals and we therefore reject the notion that violence is required for safety in our communities and commit to exploring alternative avenues for community safety and well-being.” Amendments accepted.

Jerry Cohen, faculty senator from CFANS, moved to strike “stood watch over and” from the (original) first sentence. Amendment accepted.

Michael Minta, faculty senator from CLA noted that some of these principles should be used in the contracting between the University and whatever law enforcement agency it contracts with. Potter thanked Minta and stated that the hope was that there would be a task force of students, staff, and faculty that will be tasked with considering and making recommendations such as that. She expressed hope the task force would have broad representation across the system and that people will be looking carefully at policies and procedures within their own colleges and schools that need to be modified and adjusted to address institutionalized racism, and bringing these ideas forth to the task force.

Katie Johnston-Goodstar, faculty senator from CEHD, cautioned senators not to forget that indigenous peoples experience police brutality at rates similar to the Black community and that the colonial history of Minnesota is part of this context; she encouraged members to commit to remembering and struggling with this history in all of its complexity.

Stephanie Heim, faculty senator from Extension, moved to correct or remove reference to Mr. Floyd's place of residence in the first paragraph. Amendment accepted.

James Cotner, faculty senator from the College of Biological Sciences (CBS) moved to strike the first bullet in the second list, referring to warrior-style training, noting that he would like to urge the MPD to revisit how they train themselves, but that he was not comfortable telling MPD what kind of training they should be doing. He said the language used is likely to have the opposite effect of what is intended, because it is somewhat inflammatory. Ogren spoke in opposition to the amendment, stating that warrior style training is a definite problem, to the point that the mayor, who is ostensibly in control of the police department, has banned them. Janice Conway-Klaassen, faculty senator from the Center for Allied Health Programs (CAHP) echoed Ogren's statements, saying that this type of training has been essentially banned from many institutions. She noted that the senate is urging, not requiring, the MPD to make this change. Several senators voiced agreement with these statements.

At this point, President Gabel excused herself to talk with students who were protesting outside her residence, calling for action in the aftermath of George Floyd's death. Professor Carol Chomsky, vice chair, University Senate, took over chairing the meeting.

The question was called and a vote held; the amendment in question was not adopted.

Noelle Noonan, P&A Senate chair said she agreed with Ma and Ogren that the statement did not go far enough calling for action steps and accountability. She expressed regret that Gabel and Potter had not referred to Mr. Floyd's death as murder. She therefore moved to replace all instances of "death" with "murder" or "killing." After much debate, the body voted to change all instances of "death" to "heinous killing."

Noonan then noted that the statement called for a task force to work on both University issues and societal issues and opined that it felt overly broad. She proposed that the language be specific to address University issues, and added that many members of the University are calling

for the creation of a student and community accountability council with direct oversight of campus policing and security. She urged the administration to focus on issues with campus security and policing and to direct any task force or councils to focus efforts internally, not only externally.

Adam Sychla, CBS student senator, expressed opposition to the amendment from Ma removing “we advocate against rioting and looting.”

As the time allotted for the meeting had expired, this discussion was tabled until June 5, 2020, and the meeting was adjourned.

3. Finance & Operations Planning Group Draft Recommendations (55 minutes)

Professor Amy Pittenger, chair, Faculty and Senate Consultative Committees

Please review the following documents, located in [Google Drive](#), prior to the meeting:

- Finance & Operations Planning Work Group cover letter
- Draft recommendations of the Finance & Operations Planning Work Group
- Finance & Operations Planning Work Group spreadsheet

This topic was postponed until June 5, 2020.

4. Adjournment

Professor Chomsky adjourned the meeting at 4:20 p.m.

Amber Bathke
University Senate Office