

Faculty Consultative Committee (FCC)
February 6, 2020
Minutes of the Meeting

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 reflect the views of, nor are they binding on, the senate, the administration, or the Board of Regents.

[**In these minutes:** Systemwide Strategic Plan Discussion with President Gabel and Miscellaneous Updates]

PRESENT: Phil Buhlmann (vice chair and chair pro tem), Mark Bee, Sheri Breen, Colleen Flaherty Manchester, Tabitha Grier-Reed, Michael Kyba, Peggy Nelson, Ned Patterson, John Deen, Les Drewes, Frank Gigler, Jennifer Goodnough, Jessica Larson, Julie Olson, Donna Spannaus-Martin, Clifford Steer, Carol Chomsky

REGRETS: Amy Pittenger (chair), Rob Blair, Rhonda Franklin, Lynn Lukkas

GUESTS: President Joan T.A. Gabel

OTHERS ATTENDING: Brianne Keeney, President's Office; Marcia Nichols, UMR

1. Discussion with President Gabel: Professor Buhlmann, vice chair and chair pro tem, convened the meeting and welcomed President Gabel. President Gabel said the first topic she wants to talk with the committee about is the draft Systemwide Strategic Plan. Recognizing that time is limited, and that there is a lot to talk about, President Gabel said that members can provide additional feedback after today's meeting by emailing 1) her; 2) Bri Keeney, assistant to the president; 3) Amy Pittenger, chair, FCC; and 4) Phil Buhlmann, vice chair, FCC.

When interviewing for the president position, said President Gabel, the Board of Regents (BOR) made it clear that a systemwide strategic plan was a priority for them. As previously discussed, the strategic plan commitments are the intersection between the values identified by the Systemwide Strategic Planning Committee, which was co-chaired by Vice Provost for Faculty and Academic Affairs Rebecca Ropers and U of M Rochester Chancellor Stephen Lehmkuhle during the 2016 - 2017 academic year, and a call to act on these values. Currently, goals for each of the five commitments are in the process of being articulated. Once the goals are finalized, action items will be identified. Put differently, the goals give context to the commitments and the action items, which will be measurable, will allow the institution to know whether it is meeting its goals. With that said, President Gabel walked members through the commitments and their associated goals:

- Commitment 1: Student success - meeting students where they are and maximizing their skills, potential, and well-being in a rapidly changing world.
 - Goal 1: Attract, educate, and graduate students who represent the diversity, talent, workforce, and citizenship needs of the future.
 - Goal 2: Enhance student experience, wellness, and success.

- Goal 3: Increase innovative and high-quality educational offerings across modes of delivery to reach students where they are.
- Commitment 2: Discovery, innovation & impact - channeling curiosity and investing in discovery to cultivate possibility, innovate solutions, while elevating Minnesota and society as a whole.
 - Goal 1: Increase high-impact discovery and scholarship.
 - Goal 2: Drive creativity, collaboration, and entrepreneurial spirit.
 - Goal 3: Engage Minnesota.
- Commitment 3: MNtersections - Inspired by Minnesota to improve people and places at world-class levels.
 - Goal 1: Drive innovation for next-generation health.
 - Goal 2: Build a fully sustainable future.
 - Goal 3: Advance natural resources and agro-food systems to elevate human security and potential.
- Commitment 4: Community & belonging - Fostering a welcoming community that values accessibility, equity, diversity, and dignity in people and ideas.
 - Goal 1: Recruit and retain diverse talent.
 - Goal 2: Cultivate a welcoming and inclusive campus climate.
 - Goal 3: Advance understanding and enduring partnerships.
- Commitment 5: Fiscal stewardship - Stewarding resources that promote access, efficiency, trust, and collaboration with the state, students, faculty, staff, and partners.
 - Goal 1: Reduce financial barriers to student achievement.
 - Goal 2: Align revenue allocation to incentivize forward-thinking mission fulfillment.
 - Goal 3: Build comprehensive long-range capital facilities and land-holding strategies to drive strategic growth.
 - Goal 4: Re-envision risk management and safety.

Members questions and comments included:

- Professor Olson commented that the items listed in Goal 2 under Commitment 2 (drive creativity, collaboration, and entrepreneurial spirit) seem very diverse and different from one another. In response, President Gabel said that generally speaking, a strategic plan is intended to create an architecture that is inspiring and will drive the the organization forward. Additionally, it is intended to create a platform for articulating directionality and also an architecture around accountability. She agreed that not only is a lot covered in this goal, but in the plan as a whole, which is necessary in order to clearly and concisely articulate all that the University of Minnesota does.
- Professor Flaherty Manchester said she appreciates that Commitment 3 was re-written to make it more general than the last iteration. President Gabel said that it was re-written based on her earlier feedback. Professor Flaherty Manchester said she will be curious to see to what extent the action items for Commitment 3 will be exclusionary. President Gabel said she envisions having action items that relate to each of the goals, but also an action item that says something to the effect “including, but not limited to,” which will be intended to convey that the University will continue to demonstrate its commitment to the State of Minnesota in a variety of different ways.

- Regarding Commitment 2, Goal 3 (engage Minnesota), said Professor Buhlmann, an example is actually MNtersections, which is listed as Commitment 3. President Gabel agreed and said she does not consider this necessarily a bad thing. She added that she does not believe the commitments and goals should be siloed. In her opinion, a matrixed organization is one where everything is interconnected.
- Professor Deen commented on the use of the term ‘agro-food systems’ in Commitment 3, Goal 3. President Gabel said the term is actually broader than one might think. If using this term seems too exclusionary, however, further thought can be given to changing it. She explained that agro-food systems refers to the fact that not everything that is grown agriculturally becomes food, and not all food is derived agriculturally. The University’s activities address both.
- In response to a question from Professor Flaherty Manchester about the difference between Commitment 1 and Commitment 4. President Gabel said Goal 3 under Commitment 1 focuses on leveraging technology to physically meet people where they are at, but it also has more potential than that, e.g., creating affordability accessibility. Commitment 4, on the other hand, is more about classic definitions of equity, diversity and inclusion. Commitment 1 and Commitment 4 intersect.
- Regarding Commitment 4, said Professor Buhlmann, initially he interpreted it to mean how the University fits into the community made up of the people of Minnesota, but now when reading it again, Commitment 4 seems to refer to just the University community. Is Commitment 4 about having everyone who comes to the University be a part of the University community? President Gabel said she interprets Commitment 4 as referring to the University community, but emphasized the fact that the University’s doors are open to all people who want to come here. The intent is to convey that when people are here, they are welcomed, appreciated, etc., and that the University as a collective institution, partners with others to do this well. If Commitment 4 feels exclusionary, said President Gabel, that is not the message the University wants to send. More thought will be given to the wording on this commitment. Professor Flaherty Manchester noted that what she heard President Gabel say is that the commitment reflects both the community inside the University and the University being a part of the larger community. Professor Grier-Reed said she would hesitate to put a barrier around the University community.
- Professor Deen commented on Commitment 1, Goal 2 (enhance student experience, wellness, and success), which excludes the broader University community, e.g., faculty and staff. He said he would like to see this verbiage repeated in Commitment 4. President Gabel said Goal 2 under Commitment 4 will include an action item, which has not yet been articulated, incorporating this suggestion.
- Professor Chomsky suggested the use of another verb in Commitment 4, Goal 3; the phrasing of Goal 3 is awkward as written.
- Professor Grier-Reed said when she thinks about Commitment 4 as it relates to diversity, equity and inclusion, she thinks about the University’s broken community relationships, e.g., North Minneapolis.
- Professor Chomsky questioned the use of the word ‘fostering’ in Commitment 4 and wondered if there was a better word that could be used. President Gabel noted that the BOR has already informally approved the commitments as written. While this does not

mean that the commitments cannot be changed, changing them would have to be done with great care.

- Professor Nichols pointed out a grammatical error (participle) in Commitment 2.
- Professor Olson said she likes the balance between Commitment 1 and Commitment 4 because Commitment 1 focuses on students and Commitment 4 talks about making the University reflective of everyone who comes here.
- Professor Gigler suggested that in Goal 2 under Commitment 5 the word ‘encourage’ be used rather than ‘incentivize.’ Additionally, he questioned whether it should be ‘align to’ or ‘align with.’
- Professor Deen asked whether Commitment 5 implies that the University, in some cases, has become too conservative related to its risk management strategy. Rather than describing the University’s risk management strategy as conservative, said President Gabel, she would use the word vulnerable. The University needs to think more proactively about its risk.
- Professor Flaherty Manchester suggested using a different word in Commitment 5, Goal 4 rather than ‘re-envision.’
- Professor Chomsky suggested making a small change to Commitment 5 and saying ‘stewarding resources to promote...’ rather than ‘stewarding resources that promote ...’” In her opinion, the current language makes it seem as if only certain resources, not all resources, are to be stewarded for the purposes listed.
- Professor Kyba commented that the point of stewarding resources is to maintain the University’s existence into the foreseeable future. This commitment seems to be all about keeping the University in a sustainable financial position.
- Professor Bee said he feels unsettled about Commitment 1 and its emphasis on student success. He brought up the fact that failure is a great teacher. One way to not fail, however, is to never try. Professor Bee also mentioned that Commitment 1 does not really address learning, and challenging students. President Gabel said she appreciated his feedback. She noted that “student success” is a term of art and refers to progressing toward graduation less than a classroom concept.

President Gabel thanked members for their feedback on the draft Systemwide Strategic Plan. In light of time, she then briefly provided the following updates:

- The mental health environmental scan has been completed and the information is in the process of being compiled and will be presented at an upcoming BOR meeting. She added that the University, in collaboration with Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system, will hold a mental health summit in May 2020 - more details will be forthcoming.
- The search for the vice president for student affairs has been launched and listening sessions are currently underway. This new position will be a direct report to the president.
- The TPT (Twin Cities PBS) documentary, [*This Free North: Black History at the University of Minnesota*](#), will premiere on February 18 at Northrop. The documentary will also be aired on television later in the month.
- Renamings continues to be an important area of work for the University. The BOR, earlier this year, had a discussion about renaming principles and guidelines. Information from this meeting as well as other sources has been synthesized into a draft renaming

policy that will be presented for discussion to the BOR at its February 2020 meeting. A vote on the policy will not take place until at least June.

Professor Buhlmann thanked President Gabel for her time and a good discussion.

After President Gabel's departure, Professor Steer commented on Commitment 4 (community and belonging) and noted that it is much more difficult to get admitted to the University today than in the past, particularly with the elimination of General College, which has had a profound impact on the University's climate. A caveat should be added to Commitment 4 that acknowledges that only students who 'qualify' will be admitted. The reality is that the University is not exactly a welcoming community. Professors Olson and Flaherty Manchester acknowledged this concern, which they agreed reflects out to Minnesotans across the state, and may be part of the reason for increased financial support for the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system.

2. Discussion about how to get more faculty involvement in legislative-related activities:

Professor Donna Spannaus-Martin, a faculty legislative liaison, said Government and Community Relations is interested in gathering ideas on how best to go about getting more faculty involved in legislative advocacy efforts, e.g., finding faculty who would be willing to contact their legislators and advocate on behalf of the University. With that as context for this discussion, the floor was opened for ideas/suggestions:

- Encourage faculty involvement beyond the districts where they live to include districts where faculty work and conduct their research.
- Do more to encourage and promote faculty, staff, and students to join [UMN Advocates](#) to get updates on what is happening at the capitol in St. Paul and Washington D.C., and how it affects the University of Minnesota.
- Involve system campus faculty to a greater extent in the University's legislative advocacy efforts.

Professor Spannaus-Martin asked whether the FCC would be willing to send out a mass email drafted by either Government and Community Relations and/or the legislative liaisons to spur faculty to reach out to legislators. Professor Buhlmann said the FCC would be happy to do so.

3. Adjournment: In light of time, Professor Buhlmann adjourned the meeting, and noted that the Senate Consultative Committee (SCC) will convene in approximately five minutes.

Renee Dempsey
University Senate Office