Minutes[*]

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Senate Committee on Educational Policy
Wednesday, September 7, 2011
2:00 – 4:00
238A Morrill Hall

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Present: Thomas Brothen (chair), Lee-Ann Breuch, Norman Chervany, Alon McCormick,
                Robert McMaster, Cody Mikl, Peh Ng, Jane Phillips, Leslie Schiff, Henning
                Schroeder, Paul Siliciano, Elaine Tarone, Cathrine Wambach

Absent: Barbara Brandt, Peggy Root

Guests: Vice Provost Arlene Carney, Dr. Ole Gram (Office of the Vice Provost for Faculty
               and Academic Affairs), Dr. Thomas Dohm (Office of Measurement Services)

Other: Suzanne Bardouche (Office of the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education); Tina
               Falkner (Academic Support Resources); Jon Steadland (Office of the President)

[In these minutes: (1) update on undergraduate education; (2) online student rating of teaching; (3)
update on graduate education]

1.   **Update on Undergraduate Education**

        Professor Brothen convened the meeting at 2:00, called for a round of introductions, briefly
reviewed the charge to the Committee, and then turned to Vice Provost McMaster to provide an
update on undergraduate education.

        Vice Provost McMaster distributed copies of a set of slides and walked Committee members
through most of them. He began with national trends that, he said, one must keep mind as one thinks
about the undergraduate student body. Most universities are very mindful about the importance of
carefully tracking a variety of institutional metrics.

-- Flagship campuses are becoming academically more competitive.
-- Major public research universities have placed renewed emphasis on the importance of
undergraduate education.
-- Public support for higher education has been eroding, fast.
-- The cost of a college degree, and the supporting financial aid, has risen quickly.
-- There is a national-level scrutiny on the need to improve graduation rates.
-- Students are more career focused than in the past.
-- Many freshmen arrive with college credits (AP, PSEO, College in the Schools). Some arrive as
juniors.

        Dr. McMaster provided statistics on some freshman characteristics (Twin Cities campus) for
the last five years.

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011 (est.)
Number	5,280	5,106	5,400	5,323	5,398
Ave. ACT-C	25.9	26.2	26.6	27.2	27.4
Ave. HS Rank	84.8	85.1	85.0	85.2	85.5
SOC %	20.1	20.4	19.1	18.0	18.6
MN %	66.6	67.4	64.8	65.0	64.0
National Merits	96	79	112	101	Over 150
Internationals	154	279	348	245	300

The goal for 2011 was 5280, so there will likely be about 100 more students than planned.

Dr. McMaster next reported on freshman applicants, offers, and enrollees. The number of applications has gone from about 15,000 in 2000 to nearly 40,000 in 2011—so roughly 40,000 applications for a planned 5280 slots. The number of applicants nearly doubled between 2004 and 2010. The University makes offers to about 48% of the applicant pool, 18,000 to 19,000 students. That is a lower percentage than in the past, Professor Wambach observed. They do not anticipate that the number of applications will go much higher in the future. The University has worked hard to increase the number of applications but it is not clear there would be any benefit to increasing the number further; it is now near the top of the Big Ten (except for Penn State, where a student applies to the system and is admitted to one of the many campuses).

Professor Chervany asked if the situation is such that economics are driving more students to the relatively lower-cost public university rather than, for example, one of the smaller, private liberal-arts colleges. That may be, Dr. McMaster said, and said he did not believe such students were also applying to other public institutions. If the number of applicants declines naturally, that would be fine, but the University does not expect the number to continue to grow at the current pace. Professor Ng reported that the Morris campus is seeing applications from students interested in the private colleges in Minnesota but who also look at Morris, which is the public version of those colleges.

Professor Brothen inquired if Dr. McMaster's office looks at the difference between those students who accept the offer of enrollment and those who do not. They have not, Dr. McMaster said. Professor Chervany commented that it would be VERY interesting to learn what kind of student the University is losing. Dr. McMaster agreed.

Dr. McMaster next noted the trend in ACT scores and high-school rank of new freshman. The average ACT score has increased from 24.5 in 2000 to 27.2 in 2010. The average high-school rank has increased from 76.3 to 85.2 over the same period. Some colleges have numbers that are significantly higher than those averages, Dr. McMaster reported; the freshmen in CS&E this year had an average ACT over 30, honors students averaged 32.2, and the honors students in CBS and CS&E

average is above 33. They also track the percentage of incoming freshmen who are in the top 10% and top 25% of their class; the percentage in the top 10% has increased (2001-2010) from 29.2% to 43.3% and the percentage in the top 25% has increased from 62.9% to 82.9%.

Dr. McMaster said he recently saw troubling numbers, however: At the University of Washington, 85% of the incoming freshmen are in the top 10% of their class—so the University of Minnesota has a long way to go to be similar to its peers. Professor Schiff asked what the SAT scores are for Washington students; Dr. McMaster did not have that information but noted that Washington has more out-of-state students than Minnesota. Professor Chervany inquired if Washington (the state) has the same number of comparable private institutions that Minnesota does; Dr. McMaster said it does not.

Another problem is that a number of high schools no longer compute high-school rank, Professor Brothen observed, which will make it more difficult to compare universities on that score. Professor Wambach commented that the denominator in calculating high-school rank is an interesting number. Who is included? All who started at the school? Only those who graduated? It is, she said, a goofy number.

The upshot of the changes in recent years, however, is that the Twin Cities campus has better students who graduate in a more timely fashion.

In terms of future applications and enrollment, Dr. McMaster next reported, the picture is more problematic. He noted the projected drop in high-school graduates in states in the upper Midwest; the entire catchment area of the University will see a decline. The University will also see increased competition for its own students; Nebraska, for example, is recruiting in the Twin Cities.

Professor Wambach asked what percentage of Minnesota high-school graduates the University typically enrolls. Dr. McMaster said that about 5.6% usually matriculate at the University. Professor Wambach commented that as the total number of Minnesota high school graduates goes down, the University will need to admit either a higher proportion of them or fewer Minnesotans.

One consequence of the projected decline in the number of high-school graduates, Dr. McMaster reported, is that the University has moved to more aggressive national-level recruitment. In addition to that rationale, such recruiting will enhance the "brand recognition" of the University, increase the geographic diversity of students, and bring increased workforce talent to the State of Minnesota. The tuition strategy for non-residents is that it is the resident rate + $2,500 per semester. New targeted areas for recruitment include St. Louis, MO, Kansas City, MO, Southern California, and Denver. Dr. Sigler, the Director of Admissions for the Twin Cities, also believes there is great potential for recruitment in the D.C. area and New Jersey. The latter in particular appears to be considerably underserved by public higher education.

A major project for the year, Dr. McMaster next told the Committee, is progress on the retention and graduation rates. The goal for first-year retention is 90%; in 2008 the rate was 90.7% but it slipped to 89.5% in 2009. The four-year graduation-rate goal is 90%; for the incoming freshmen in 2006, the four-year graduation rate (in spring 2010) was 50.2% (up from 37% in 2001—and from 15.2% in 1992). They will know the four-year rate for the 2007 freshmen later in October; Dr. McMaster surmised that the rate may be up about three percentage points, to perhaps 53-54%. Most

of the Twin Cities peers have a first-year retention rate of 93-94%, and this campus should be in that same range. They have learned that the campus loses a higher percentage of out-of-state students than it should, so they are developing programs for those students.

Professor Tarone asked if they know why students drop out. Dr. McMaster said they do administer surveys (which not all students complete); the primary reasons appear to be financial or homesickness. A significant number are students who return home to Wisconsin to attend one of the University of Wisconsin campuses. What he asks, Dr. McMaster related, is why the campus cannot get six out of every ten students to graduate in four years. Ms. Phillips observed that one out of ten leaves during the first year, so it's really six out of nine students. Even if the campus loses 10% per year—which is too many—the graduation rate should still be at 60%, Dr. McMaster pointed out.

Professor Chervany said he looks at the four-into-five year students. There could be impediments to graduating in four years, such as lack of money, scheduling, changing major, etc. There could be a long list of reasons why students do not graduate in four years. Professor Siliciano asked if they can identify the number of students who keep the same major, or not. They can, Dr. McMaster said, and many students do change majors but also still graduate in four years. Some changes, however, make that more of a problem than others. What about changes of college, Professor Siliciano asked—does that make it more difficult to graduate in four years?

Professor Wambach noted that 80% of students are still enrolled after four years, and that is the critical question. If they are still at the University, the problem could be a change of major or something else. The University can track where students go after they leave if they go to another school; what proportion of those who leave transfer to another school? Dr. McMaster acknowledged that they can track students who remain in higher education and are beginning to look more closely at those who transfer elsewhere. It would help to know if they are leaving to attend another school like the Twin Cities campus, to a private institution, to a community college, and so on, Professor Wambach said.

Professor Chervany asked how the University counts students who graduate elsewhere. They are simply gone from the University, Dr. McMaster said. So, Professor Chervany said, a student can be on track for three years and then leave, which is a different issue from that of a student who is on track and transfers and graduates elsewhere. If they want to push up the four-year graduation rate, knowing both sets of numbers would be useful: those on track but who leave and don't graduate anywhere and those who leave but graduate elsewhere.

Professor McCormick asked, with respect to the one-year retention rate, about PSEO and other students who might enroll but never intend to get a degree from the University. Do those students count against the retention and graduation rate? They do not, Dr. McMaster said; the statistics are based on degree-seeking students. And about 40% of PSEO students at the University also then attend the University. Ms. Phillips noted that they have an 11-year-old PSEO student.

Professor Siliciano recalled that the Committee in the past has looked at data on the required number of credits to obtain a degree and learned that some disciplines require more than 120 credits. Dr. McMaster said that some fields are reducing the number of credits required and the colleges are mindful of the issue. Professor McCormick said he has tracked the students in his department

(Chemical Engineering & Material Science) and discovered that if a student has no problem, he or she can graduate in four years. But if the student encounters a problem, it will add a year to the program.

Dr. McMaster next reviewed briefly the University Honors Program (its advising model and curriculum). There were 613 new freshmen in the Honors Program this fall, bringing the program to its full complement of students, about 2400. The qualifications of the entire Honors class are equivalent to a small private school such as Carleton or Macalester, with students whose average ACT scores are equivalent to the very best universities. The first class of Honors Program students will graduate at the end of this year, and Dr. McMaster said he expects to see an exceptionally high graduation rate in that group.

Dr. McMaster also touched on the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program (UROP). The awards have been increasing steadily over the last several years; there are about 660 on the Twin Cities campus now (and over 200 on the coordinate campuses). The goal is to have 1000 students in the program, and they are hoping for an infusion of new dollars to bring up the number of participants.

The Access to Success program is for high-school students who would not normally be admitted to the Twin Cities campus but who possess characteristics that lead the admissions staff to believe they can succeed. At present the program is only offered through three colleges; they are looking at a redesign and how well the various parts are working. The preliminary judgment is that the program is successful and that perhaps it should be University-wide and should be for four years, not just one. He said the Committee could look forward to a report on Access to Success later in the fall.

Because time was running out, Dr. McMaster quickly highlighted data about the Freshman Seminars (students who take them graduate in four years at a higher rate than those who do not), curricular initiatives (writing plans and the writing-enriched curriculum), and the revised liberal-education curriculum (the campus is in very good shape this fall in terms of the number of courses in each of the core and theme requirements). Dr. McMaster touched on the cost of attendance ($23,058 in 2010-11 and $23,982 in 2011-12). He also noted a graph that illustrated the various sources of funds to pay for attendance (parental, loan, grant/gift, etc.) depending on parental income. The basic message is that as one goes from low to high income, the formula shifts from grants to loans.

Professor Ng commented, with respect to four-year graduation, that she could not see any incentive for staying an extra year, given that it costs so much to attend. Dr. McMaster said he couldn't, either, and noted that much of the financial aid available only covers four years (except for Pell Grants, which will cover six years). That has always been true, he said. Professor McCormick asked if financial aid affects the four-year graduation rate. It does, Dr. McMaster said. He said he recently spoke with a student who told him she would graduate in three and one-half years because she did not want to pay the extra semester's tuition. One can always see the cases, one hopes are rare, of students who do not want to graduate because they must then begin repaying loans, Professor McCormick said. Ms. Bardouche said the financial aid data for Twin Cities undergraduate students shows that over the past five years the proportion of total student aid that is from gifts (scholarships, grants, and other forms of aid that do not have to be repaid) is increasing (from 33% to 43%), while the proportion that is from loans is decreasing (from 61% to 52%). This is a good trend. Dr. McMaster also related that he talked to a group of four students about the number of credits they had brought from high school; the numbers were 99, 60, 30, and 27. The student with 99 wants to finish in

two years; when Dr. McMaster suggested he would lose much of the undergraduate experience, the student said he did not want pay for two additional years. So, Professor McCormick concluded, the "high tuition, high aid" model accelerates graduation rates. Dr. McMaster said he suspected that it does. There is no evidence, however, that PSEO students graduate faster, Professor Wambach pointed out; what they do is take more electives.

Professor Brothen thanked Vice Provost McMaster for his presentation.

2   Online Student Ratings of Teaching

Professor Brothen now welcomed Vice Provost Carney and Drs. Dohm and Gram to discuss a proposal concerning online student ratings of teaching.

Dr. Carney began by noting that issues of student ratings of teaching are in her portfolio because the results are used in the promotion and tenure process. For that reason, it is important that there be good response rates. She said they are bringing today a question about the policy on student ratings of teaching and online ratings.

Dr. Gram explained that they know the response rate for online ratings is dismal, less than 50%, and it may be declining. They also know, from other institutions, that one way to increase the response rate is to tie completion of the form to the ability of the student to see grades. If they fill out the rating form, they have access to their grades; if they have not, when they try to see their grades, they are presented with a screen asking them to complete the online rating form. The current policy does not seem to prohibit this option, so they are seeking the counsel of the Committee about interpreting the policy to adopt this approach.

Dr. Gram also reported that the current system for online ratings of teaching is "essentially broken" and Dr. Dohm and his office, in concert with the Office of Planning and Analysis, is working on a new system. The new one would allow integration with grading and include a photograph of the instructor. Dr. Carney reported that only 5-10% of courses use online ratings, and one reason so few do is because the response rate is so low. Even Computer Science had an online system but moved back to paper forms because the response rates were so low. And even if many more classes wanted to use the existing system, it could not accommodate them. (Dr. Carney reported that they want to include the photograph because she receives calls and emails from students every semester saying they gave their ratings about the wrong instructor and asking if they can change them—which they cannot.)

What is the Committee's view, Dr. Carney inquired? They would include an option on the rating form that would permit a student to decline to fill it out (as is the case in the Academic Health Center).

Professor Siliciano inquired if there are legal issues. Dr. Falkner reported that accrediting agencies often require student ratings of teaching, so they have allowed students to say they do not wish to fill out the form. Committee members may recall that some instructors wanted to give extra credit to students who filled out the online rating form, Dr. Carney said, but in order to do so they needed to have the names of the students who filled out the form; she brought the issue to the Committee, which decided that it was impermissible to give extra credit for filling out the form.

Professor Chervany asked if it is up to the instructor or the school to decide whether to use paper or the online forms. It is typically the department that decides, Dr. Carney said. So it is within the college, Professor Chervany said. Are students in the classroom are required to fill out the paper form? They are not, Dr. Carney said. And they can still see their grades, Professor Chervany said—so it would be unfair to require students to fill out the online form before allowing access to grades when the same requirement is not imposed on students who fill out the paper form. If students are also allowed to opt out of filling out the paper form, then this proposal is acceptable. Ms. Phillips reported that in her college, they have good response rates because students are offered the chance for a prize; could the University do the same?

Dr. Carney reported also that the paper system is cheaper than the online version. And the information is turned into electronic data, Dr. Dohm added. Printing the forms is the major expense; the online forms are very labor-intensive.

Professor Wambach said she would like to see a lot better online system in order to do assessments one cannot do with a paper system; she said she would also like to see the opportunity to complete the online assessment remain open after the end of the semester—students may be in a better position to assess the course later than while still enrolled in it.

Professor Breuch observed that in the case of instructors in online courses, they have no choice—they must use the online system. She has taught several such courses and some of them have had very few student ratings. She said she strongly endorsed the proposal from Dr. Carney.

Professor Chervany repeated his view that the proposal is fine if the opt-out provision is very clear. He also agreed that a photo is essential. Faculty members are not required to provide a photo, Dr. Dohm commented; Professor Siliciano said that instructors can decline to provide one. The risk is then on their shoulders, Professor Chervany responded.

Professor Siliciano pointed out that students can get their grades from Moodle or WebVista without going through the Registrar. In fact, most instructors post grades to Moodle or WebVista, and these grades show up immediately (before the grades from the Registrar). If final grades are posted on Moodle, it will be ineffective to withhold grades until the student completes an evaluation.

Professor Schiff asked if there is evidence from other institutions about the quality of responses on the rating forms when they are filled out as a result of inability to see grades. Or is it the case that assessment may be better after the fact, as Professor Wambach suggested? Dr. Carney said that she is amazed that peer institutions have moved to online systems, even while recognizing that response rates are dismal, and using the results for personnel decisions. Knowing how expensive it is to modify PeopleSoft systems, Dr. Falkner said, it would be helpful if they are allowed to identify various ways that students might be provided incentives to complete the online rating forms. Drs. Carney and Gram agreed that they can explore the options.

Professor Breuch commented that part of her is upset about the low response rates, because filling out the forms is part of their responsibilities as students. She favored the withholding of grades as an incentive and said she favored any clear incentives.

Professor Chervany said the two systems, online and paper, should be as similar as possible, and he said he opposed incentives.

Professor Brothen said the Committee believes Dr. Carney and her colleagues are moving in the right direction and that it will await a formal proposal. He thanked them for joining the meeting.

3.   Update on Graduate Education

Professor Brothen welcomed Vice Provost Schroeder to the meeting to provide an update on graduate education.

Dr. Schroeder began with a brief background of the changes that are being implemented; the primary intention is to make the programs more competitive, allow them to be more nimble, and to allow more local control. [The following minutes draw heavily on a memo Vice Provost Schroeder provided to the Committee.] The recommendations fall into five main categories:

1. Policy and Governance
2. Operational and Budgetary Efficiency
3. Fellowships, Block Grants, and Other Student Financial Support
4. Metrics and Measurement
5. Graduate Student Experience and Advising

In terms of (1), policy and governance, "a more streamlined governance structure has replaced the six Policy and Review Councils and the Executive Committee with a provisional Graduate Education Council. The election of a permanent council is scheduled for fall 2011. Six key graduate education policies have been reformulated, approved, and will reside in the University-wide policy library. The remaining policies are expected to move through the consultative and approval process beginning fall 2011. Two campus-wide Graduate and Professional Education Assemblies were held to identify critical issues confronting graduate education in the national context, and to foster student- and discipline-centered models of program review. Graduate commencement was provided by the colleges this spring." Dr. Schroeder expressed great respect and admiration for the ad hoc committee being chaired by Professor Nita Krevans that is reworking the graduate-education policies.

There will be a nominating committee in the Graduate Education Council to review nominees and to identify a slate of candidates representing disciplines and colleges across the institution as much as possible. The Graduate Education Council will advise him and others on all matter of issues related to graduate education, Dr. Schroeder related.

With respect to (2), operational and budgetary efficiencies, "the Graduate School operation has been streamlined with a staff reduction of 34% since fiscal year 2010, resulting in permanent cost savings of $1 million per year. To digitize and automate graduate education administrative processes, the Graduate School has collaborated closely with Academic Support Resources. Graduate student record structure and the Program and Curriculum Approval System have been significantly modified to allow ready-access of student records and graduate program information online. The central admission system, ApplyYourself [used by a number of the University's peers], completed the transition to paperless admissions this year. It now permits immediate parallel access to electronic

applications by both the graduate programs and central admissions office. This has further increased speed and efficiency of the admission process.

"Starting fall 2011, a pilot project has been launched in testing the decentralization of processes and approvals relating to degree progress tracking and degree clearance from the Graduate School to the pilot college. Central tools will continue to be built to allow other colleges to participate in this initiative."

Professor Chervany asked, apropos of the savings in the Graduate School, what the colleges would say about costs that have been pushed to them. He said he applauded the digitization of administrative processes, but one must look at the net savings or the net-number story in the current financial circumstances of the University. Dr. Schroeder said it would difficult to assess the college costs; some colleges have hired associate deans for graduate studies, at 20% or 30% or 50% appointments. That is an investment, but one hope is that the story about faculty members giving up on proposing a new course or program (due to too many central bureaucratic hurdles) will not be repeated. The colleges could be incurring costs, but if they can act more quickly and can recruit better students, that is a gain. That is the way the story should be told, Professor Chervany commented.

On point (3), fellowships, block grants, and other student financial support, "the 2010-11 academic year was the last year that the Graduate School administered the Graduate Student Fellowship (GSF) program for first-year graduate students totaling $3.5 million per year. Starting in 2011-12, fellowship funds are being redistributed to the academic colleges, which will be responsible for packaging their own funding support offers to recruit their graduate students. More importantly, the University has made a commitment of maintaining the level of student funding support despite several rounds of budget retrenchment. Starting in fiscal year 2013, the Quality Metric Allocation plan will replace the Block Grants (see below).

"President Kaler has recently decided to allocate an additional $2 million per year for 3 years to the Doctoral Dissertation Fellowship program, resulting in an annual award amount of $5.5 million." Dr. Schroeder commented that the data show that in every discipline, students with a Doctoral Dissertation Fellowship graduate faster than those without one; they allow students to do their research and finish their degrees and not have to worry about being a TA or an RA.

"The Graduate Student Financing Task Force submitted its final report to the Provost on September 1, 2011 in response to the charge by the Provost to produce a set of recommendations addressing two key questions:

"1) What are some of the short term mechanisms that can be used to address the problem with NIH compensation cap and the gap in educational allowance? What are the pros and cons for each mechanism?

"2) What are some of the options that can provide the longer term solutions to these challenges including an examination of our existing tuition model particularly in light of the fiscal difficulties and increased competition in graduate education confronting our University?

"The options presented in the report will be discussed with the University community in the coming months."

Professor Wambach said she was hearing concerns about moving the block grants to the colleges. Faculty worry that there will be pressure on the deans to distribute the money equitably across programs rather than using the funds to ensure that strong programs stay strong. The question is how to ensure the existence of a mechanism to be sure that programs receive the support they need to stay strong. Some faculty members believe there should be a strong central role.

Dr. Schroeder pointed out that the Doctoral Dissertation Fellowships remain central. The first-year fellowships went to the colleges with the idea that they can create packages that allow them to recruit the students they need. He agreed with Professor Wambach, however, that there may be an issue with respect to the block grants. He pointed out that there are metrics (discussed later) that can be applied to all disciplines, and there will be lump sums of money provided to the deans based on those metrics and the narrative provided by the colleges. Deans will be held accountable for the outcomes of the distribution of the funds; if they make bad investments, there will be discussions at the compact meetings (or through whatever process is in place). He is also in touch with the deans constantly. The Graduate School will also directly fund intercollegiate, interdisciplinary programs, in consultation with the participating deans; the approach that was chosen last year—dividing the money between the colleges that co-own these interdisciplinary programs—did not work very well.

Dr. Schroeder noted that the subcommittee on graduate education of the Enrollment Management Committee has developed a detailed set of metrics that are likely to be adopted next year. The subcommittee strongly recommends identifying the best programs and supporting them, so does not support an equal distribution of funds.

Dr. Schroeder turned next to item (4), metrics and measurement. "Funding allocations in FY13 will be determined based on a set of nationally recognized metrics including time to degree, completion rate, attrition pattern, placement record, etc. The set of metrics will continue to be developed and refined over the coming years. Quality metric funding allocations will be directed to collegiate deans for greater local control.

"Quality Metrics Allocation Plan details:
-- Designed to allocate funding on a merit basis.
-- Distribution decisions will be based on a transparent set of quality metrics.
-- Phase I of this multi-year plan will be implemented for fiscal year 2013.
-- Input from the broader graduate education community will be solicited to help build and continually refine the set of quality-indicating metrics and plan details in the coming years.
-- Data from graduate programs offering the Ph.D., MS, MA and MFA degrees are being considered during <u>phase I</u> of this new plan.
-- Time to degree, completion rates, Bostrom Efficiency Index (for Ph.D. only, see explanation below), and placement data are included.
-- For time to degree, data from students who graduated between July 2001 and June 2011 (ten academic years) are used to identify trends
         -- median data (MdnTTD) are used to reduce the impact of "outliers" or extreme values
         -- calculated as the time between the first enrollment date in the graduate program, regardless of initial degree objective (Ph.D., master's or non-degree), and degree conferral date

          -- time away from the program was not deducted from the total time between first
          enrollment and degree completion
          -- for Ph.D. students, the first enrollment date does not change or reset even if students
          earned a master's degree along the way to completing their Ph.D. degrees in the same
          graduate program
     -- For the completion rates, cohorts from 1993-94 to 2006-07 are used to identify trends.
          -- for Ph.D. students, the 4-, 6-, and 8-year completion rates are included
          -- for master's students (MA, MS, and MFA), the 2-, 4-, and 6-year completion rates are
          included
          -- data are cumulative, that is, the number of graduates in the 6-year completion includes
          those who graduated in 4 years and the 8-year completion includes those who graduated in
          less than 8 years
     -- The Bostrom Efficiency Index assigns points to each Ph.D. student outcome, and deducts
points for time spent in the graduate program. In other words, it rewards timely Ph.D. completion
and penalizes non-completes (dropouts). Early attrition is being penalized less than late attrition.
Leaving the program with a master's degree is better than leaving without a degree.
          -- five, three-year rolling periods from July 2004 to June 2011 are used to smooth the data
          and identify trends
          -- each Ph.D. student can only have one outcome, either obtaining a Ph.D. degree, a
          master's degree without the Ph.D., or discontinuation (gone inactive)
          -- students who are still active have not yet had an outcome, and do not affect these
          numbers
          -- time spent in the program is capped at 10 years
          -- higher index value is better and it is important to look at the trend
     -- Placement data were collected as part of the annual program profile update. Responses
submitted by the programs from late 2004 to late 2009 (the last year it was collected) are
considered."

       Dr. Schroeder commented that they are proposing to use data for master's degree students as
well as Ph.D. students because there are a lot more master's students, and they should not be left out of
the equation since they also contribute to the research mission of the University. In FY13 professional
master's students are not part of the metrics. They will need to further develop the gathering of data
and narratives as well as the metrics themselves in order to incorporate these programs in future
evaluation cycles.

       If the master's students are included, will they be included in assessing top programs, or can
only Ph.D. programs be a "top program," Professor Tarone asked. When he and President Kaler have
discussed supporting top programs, Dr. Schroeder related, the reference has always been to the
National Research Council (NRC) study, so it is about Ph.D. programs. So funding could be moved
away from non-Ph.D. programs, Professor Tarone asked? No, Dr. Schroeder said; the metrics in FY13
are based on data for master's degrees as well, and determine the funding provided to the deans. It is a
local decision about the extent to which master's programs and students should be supported.

       Professor Wambach said the dollars for fellowships were mostly for Ph.D. students but now it
will be up to the colleges to decide what to do with them, and that is a real shift. She noted that she
served on the graduate-education subcommittee, and they reanalyzed the NRC data and looked at
clusters of programs. The Bostrom Index, devised by a person in the Graduate School, is a very

interesting number and it tracks well with NRC ratings; it allows one to look at program efficiency compared to peer programs and the change over time. Colleges will find the Index very useful, she said.

And it is also very simple, Dr. Schroeder added. They will use the numbers, and the data have been provided to the deans. In addition to the data, they expect to receive from the deans narrative to help explain the numbers. (For example, a sudden drop in graduate-student completion might be because students dropped out or it might be because a faculty member left for another institution and took several graduate students along.) The Bostrom Index flags programs about which a conversation can be had. Before they distribute funds connected to outcomes, they will assemble a review team drawn from the graduate-education subcommittee, the associate deans, and the Office of Planning and Analysis to help understand the data. They will seek the advice of experts, Dr. Schroeder assured the Committee.

Professor Tarone said she could appreciate the value of the Bostrom Index for Ph.D. programs, but what about the quality and tracking of mid-level master's programs? Those also need to be monitored.

Dr. Schroeder next said that placement data will also be gathered for master's programs.

Professor Chervany said that what he was hearing is that perhaps 10-15% of Ph.D. programs need to be protected, but the data will come from master's degrees as well as Ph.D.s. It is ambiguous what will be used. He said that the Committee seems to be saying that there should be information on the master's programs as well. They need to be clear what programs they will look at and how the data will be combined. Whatever determines the top 10-15% should include the quality of master's programs.

Dr. Schroeder reported that they have struggled with how to incorporate master's programs. In FY13 the MS, MA, and MFA are in the Quality Metrics allocation plan, and as long as they are part of a graduate program that also offers the PhD they are included in the Bostrom Index. Many schools focus only on the Ph.D. programs, but Minnesota is different in that it has so many good master's programs.

Dr. Schroeder turned to item (5), graduate student experience and advising: "In the fall 2010 Graduate and Professional Education Assembly, a break-out session was dedicated to advising as a one of five critical issues. Discussion identified training of advisers (initially and ongoing) as the top priority in this area, with incentives and evaluation. The spring assembly, which focused on program evaluation, took the recommendation from the fall assembly to the next step. Discussion and exercises demonstrated how the program evaluation process can be used to articulate, evaluate, and reward high quality advising and improving graduate student experience and learning outcomes. As a continuation of the spring assembly, a workshop will be held on November 10, 2011 for a group of collegiate representatives to share their initiatives and experience in promoting internal program assessment.

"The Graduate School is collaborating with College of Education and Human Development in the Graduate Review and Improvement Process (GRIP) Project to help generate and develop new ideas in improving the graduate student experience that will likely lead to the enhancement of quality of our graduate programs."

        The University should think about implementing a program-evaluation mechanism that allows a more continuous way to improve programs, rather than just review them every ten years. The work with the Department of Organizational Leadership, Policy, and Development in the College of Education and Human Development is to develop a pilot project, because the department has expertise in program evaluation.

        It was agreed that Dr. Schroeder would return later in the year to discuss the categories of programs suggested by the graduate-education subcommittee and the program-evaluation process.

        Professor Brothen thanked Dr. Schroder for his report, and adjourned the meeting at 4:00.

                                        -- Gary Engstrand

University of Minnesota