



Minutes of:

The Student Senate

Thursday, April 23, 2020

11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Amy Ma, chair, Student Senate, called the meeting to order at 11:30 a.m.

1. Administrative Response to Senate Actions (*Information*)

- There are no pending responses.

2. Approval of the Minutes for February 27, 2020 Meeting (*Action*)

Amy Ma, chair, Student Senate Consultative Committee (SSCC) and Student Senate

Motion: To approve the Student Senate [minutes from February 27, 2020](#).

Mattea Allert, incoming student senator, College of Science and Engineering (CSE), raised a point of order, stating her concerns that language found in the Student Senate Handbook regarding those eligible for senate officer roles was misleading and could mean that certain currently held positions were invalid. Ma acknowledged Allert's concerns and stated that the language in the handbook was incorrect. However, all elections have been held within the guidelines of the official bylaws. Allert further expressed her concerns that it is problematic to have contradicting language in the handbook and in the bylaws. Ma added that she will work with the SSCC to address and correct the issue within the handbook. Isaiah Ogren, ranking student senator, Student Senate, added that the handbook is not an official governing document and is used as more of an onboarding and guidance tool for new senators.

Hearing no further discussion, a vote was taken, and the motion was approved.

3. Discussion with President Joan T.A. Gabel

Joan T.A. Gabel, president, University of Minnesota

Ma introduced Joan T.A. Gabel, president, University of Minnesota, to provide a general update on a variety of topics at the University. Gabel began her presentation by acknowledging and thanking the students for their willingness and ability to change to a distance learning format for the remainder of the spring semester due to the COVID-19 pandemic. She stated that these pivots have been challenging but she appreciates the efforts put forward by so many in the community to continue the mission of the University. Gabel then provided some brief updates, including the following:

- There are several resources for mental health services and financial aid for students available through One Stop Student Services.
- Graduations and commencements are not cancelled and will be held virtually.
- All summer classes will be held online.
- The administration is working with faculty to provide additional resources for summer opportunities for students.
- The administration is addressing concerns from graduate students about funding and continuance of their research.
- The administration is putting together two working groups to guide finances and academic planning through the health crisis and both groups will have student representation.
- CARES ACT funding, the federal stimulus funding for higher education, has yet to be received by the University, but half of those funds will be completely dedicated to student support.

Gabel then provided an update about the Systemwide Strategic Plan and the action items that will need to be approved by the Board of Regents. Gabel presented a [slide deck](#) and informed the senators about possible next steps or action items for each commitment. Gabel said that the commitments are meant to be specific and measurable, clear with distinct goals and action items, a guidepost for what kind of institution we want to be, and adaptable to changing circumstances. The Strategic Plan is not meant to be a detailed playbook that provides an answer to every potential decision. The commitments, goals, and action items are as follows:

- Student Success
 - Goals
 - Attract, educate, and graduate students who represent the diversity, talent, workforce, and citizenship needs of the future.
 - Establish comprehensive systemwide strategic enrollment management strategy.
 - Improve retention and graduation rates while closing gaps.
 - Expand scholarship opportunities.
 - Enhance student experience, wellness, and success.
 - Establish a systemwide mental health initiative.
 - Strengthen career readiness and placement for all students.
 - Implement a holistic approach to student wellness.
 - Increase innovative and high-quality educational offerings across modes of delivery to reach students where they are.

- Develop innovative, coordinated, and scaled systemwide distributed learning models that increase access and meet workforce needs.
 - Establish greater academic calendar flexibility to increase student engagement and year-round access.
 - Enhance the quality and support for educational offerings.
- Discovery, Innovation, & Impact
 - Goals
 - Increase high-impact discovery and scholarship.
 - Prioritize research opportunities for all students.
 - Increase year over year funding growth for research and industry-sponsored awards.
 - Advance career outcomes for graduate students and post-docs.
 - Cultivate creativity, collaboration, and entrepreneurial spirit.
 - Enhance opportunities for new businesses and start-ups, corporate partnerships, and technology commercialization.
 - Increase multidisciplinary opportunities in research and curriculum.
 - Advance the arts and humanities through strategic collaborations.
 - Engage and impact Minnesota at world-class levels.
 - Elevate national and international profile and standing while addressing societal needs.
 - Enhance Carnegie Community Engagement designation across the system, and measure and expand outreach and engagement.
 - Increase MnDRIVE partnership funding.
- MNtersections
 - Goals
 - Drive innovation for next-generation health.
 - Increase collaborations to serve as a model in health education, clinical training, and new models of care.
 - Deepen impact in core areas of strength (i.e. medtech).
 - Serve as a destination practice for leading delivery models.
 - Build a fully sustainable future.
 - Demonstrate state and worldwide leadership in sustainability and environmental teaching, research, and convening power.
 - Establish system leadership and governance coordination for sustainability initiatives.
 - Develop next-generation systemwide Climate Action Plan for 2030.
 - Advance natural resources and agro-food systems to elevate human security and potential.
 - Develop and deploy new techniques and partnerships for smart farming and sustainable food supplies, and natural resources.

- Expand, develop and retain agricultural and food system talent in rural communities and agribusiness.
 - Enhance Extension's impact and reach.
- Community & Belonging
 - Goals
 - Recruit and retain diverse talent.
 - Recruit diverse students, faculty, and staff.
 - Retain diverse students, faculty, and staff.
 - Reduce disparities among underrepresented groups.
 - Cultivate a welcoming and inclusive campus climate.
 - Measure and address annual climate survey data.
 - Increase job satisfaction.
 - Develop education and training to increase intercultural competency and interactional diversity.
 - Advance understanding and nurture enduring partnerships.
 - Advance deeper understanding of institutional history.
 - Strengthen collaborative relations with Tribal Nations.
 - Drive mutually beneficial relationships with underserved local communities, as well as with strategic partners (i.e. MN State), to enhance society and access to higher education.
- Fiscal Stewardship
 - Goals
 - Reduce financial barriers to student achievement.
 - Reduce student debt.
 - Increase on-campus employment opportunities for all students.
 - Establish a system-wide tuition-free program for low-income families.
 - Align revenue with forward-thinking mission fulfillment.
 - Establish leading-edge tuition and pricing model.
 - Define and establish an administrative cost benchmark.
 - Identify and maximize non-state support, including new revenue opportunities aligned to institutional goals.
 - Build comprehensive long-range capital facilities and land-holding strategies to drive strategic growth.
 - Establish new long-term physical master plan for each campus, updated regularly.
 - Advance innovative financing to support long term strategic objectives.
 - Establish land retention, acquisition, and use strategy.
 - Re-envision risk management and safety.
 - Improve risk management through innovative tech and processes.
 - Assess and improve campus safety protocols and organizational structure.

- Engage in continuous improvement practices to promote efficiency in all aspects of operations.

Scott Petty, student senator, College of Food, Agricultural and Natural Resources Sciences (CFANS), provided a [graph](#) and a pre-written question:

President Gabel, could you take a few minutes and walk us through the major revenue streams the University depends upon and your rough expectations of how you expect each to fluctuate next year and over the few years after as you and your administration have to grapple with the impact of Covid-19? (I have included a pie chart for reference and some enrollment figures from the last major recession) Gabel replied that discretionary spending is a very small subset of the \$4.2 billion in revenues that the University has budgeted to bring in in FY20. Gabel said that they are not expecting a dip in major grants and are hopeful that funding from the federal government is stable. Tuition, sales, and fees are expected to take a big hit depending on enrollment and when students can return to campus. Gabel added that state support will likely be flat since the state is in the second year of the biennial budget. The University is modeling for various scenarios in the fall and how it will impact the overall finances of the University.

Gabel then provided a brief update regarding the proposed policy change for the renaming of campus buildings. She provided the senators with some [documents](#) on the issue from the Board of Regents. Gabel reminded the students that this issue arose from an exhibit known as “Campus Divided” which led to the University attempting to address its history of institutional racism. After an attempt to rename four buildings on the Twin Cities campus failed, the Board of Regents tasked the administration to develop a policy framework for an addendum to the namings policy to also address renamings. Gabel stated that the administration has co-sponsored several educational activities around the issue and is consulting on the issue with appropriate stakeholders. Gabel requested that senators review the proposed amendments to the policy and provide feedback and recommendations in the near future.

Ogren asked about student wellness within the Strategic Plan and how that incorporates faculty and their expectations of students. Gabel replied that it is very much a timeless question that is exacerbated by this pandemic. The Faculty Consultative Committee has charged itself with developing new methods of training for faculty around accommodations to reflect the lack of expertise in online learning. Faculty need to be partners in solving and addressing the student mental health crisis.

4. Assembly/Association Updates

- Sam Shepherd, Student Senate Consultative Committee (SSCC) member, University of Minnesota Duluth (UMD), said that the Student Association’s new congress has recently started to meet and they are holding transition meetings. He said that they intend to hold a special session over the summer as well.
- Nathan Carlson from the Rochester Student Association (RSA) stated that RSA recently held its last executive board meeting, which was his last of his collegiate career.

- Manpreet Singh from the Crookston Student Association (CSA) stated that the CSA is conducting its final meeting of the year as this Student Senate meeting is happening. Additionally, CSA concluded its elections yesterday and their new senators should be available shortly to participate in officer elections for next year. Singh will continue in this role on the SSCC for next year as well.
- Josh Westfield, SSCC representative, Morris Campus Student Association (MCSA) presented the following [slide deck](#) with his updates. He stated that MCSA elections have concluded in March and are transitioning roles. They have recently completed multiple initiatives, including technology fee allocations, distributing emergency funds to students in need, and administered a COVID-19 survey of students. This has led to MCSA proposing a “Universal Pass” policy that would allow students to elect S/N grading by their last day of instruction. Sam Rosemark, student body president, MCSA, commented that this policy change would help students who are experiencing stress and uncertainty as they have transitioned to online learning. Finally, Rosemark read a statement on behalf of the five undergraduate student body presidents asking for respectful elections for the officers of the Student Senate and admonishing actions that may be deemed inappropriate or disrespectful.
- Josh Lesser, SSCC member, Professional Student Government (PSG), said that PSG has reallocated its grant funding to the emergency funding for fellow students during this crisis.
- Madison Anderson, SSCC member, Council of Graduate Students (COGS), said that COGS recently held elections for its leadership team and is conducting virtual programming for its members while the shelter in place order is in effect.
- Briggs Tople, SSCC member, Minnesota Student Association (MSA), said that MSA is providing weekly statements from the executive board while the student body president has been actively advocating for the changes from A-F grading to S/N. MSA’s representatives to the Board of Regents have had timely and prompt responses to the board’s dockets. The MSA legislative team has worked on proposals at the Capitol and on campus around bird glass, and the increase of insurance availability for undergraduate students.
- Ryan Machtmes, vice chair, Student Senate, recently met with the P&A Senate which discussed pay tables and the fact that there will be one additional two-week pay period next year.
- Isaiah Ogren, ranking student senator, Student Senate, stated that search for the new vice president for the Office of Student Affairs has been suspended and there is no current timetable for its resumption.

5. Student Senate/Student Senate Consultative Committee Chair Report

Amy Ma, chair, Student Senate Consultative Committee (SSCC) and Student Senate

Ma reported that she was excited to see what the Student Senate will be doing moving forward. She commented that the current circumstances have really hindered much of the work that was being discussed over the course of the year but she encouraged those who will lead the Student Senate to pick up those projects. She said that she was most proud of the work completed to raise awareness about food insecurity across the state and hopes to see further reforms, including textbook affordability, accessible learning spaces, and better student involvement in conversations around liberal education requirements.

Ma further encouraged students to stay involved with the administration regarding other topics like the Systemwide Strategic Plan and the Renaming Policy efforts. Student safety should also be a topic of focus moving forward, said Ma. A great way to stay involved is to also apply to serve on a University Senate committee. Finally, Ma stated that she has been working closely with Faculty Consultative Committee Chair Amy Pittenger, and will continue to engage with that group as issues may arise over the summer.

6. Student Senate Stipend Review Subcommittee Recommendations (*Action*)

Sam Shepherd, member, Student Senate Stipend Review Subcommittee

For information: The Student Senate Consultative Committee, less its stipend-receiving members, shall review the performance of duties of all stipend-receiving members and vote on the approval, reduction, or withholding of the portion of their stipends allocated for spring semester. A two-thirds affirmative vote by the Student Senate Consultative Committee is required for modification of stipend disbursement.

The Student Senate Consultative Committee recommendation shall be presented to the Student Senate for approval at or before the Student Senate's last regular meeting of spring semester. Stipend receiving persons have a right to answer questions about or speak regarding the Student Senate Consultative Committee's findings at this meeting if they so chose. A two-thirds vote of the Student Senate is required to modify the Student Senate Consultative Committee recommendation.

Motion: The Student Senate Stipend Review Committee has reviewed the performance of the following stipend-receiving students: Amy Ma, chair, SSCC/Student Senate; Ryan Machtmes, vice chair, SSCC/Student Senate; and Isaiah Ogren, ranking student senator, SSCC/Student Senate. The recommendation from the committee is that:

- Amy Ma receive \$1,250.00 of the \$1,250.00 spring semester portion of her stipend
- Ryan Machtmes receive \$500.00 of the \$500.00 spring semester portion of his stipend
- Isaiah Ogren receive \$500.00 of the \$500.00 spring semester portion of his stipend

Comment: The Student Senate Stipend Review Committee reviewed the performance of all three individuals and determined that the stipend amounts listed above should be awarded to the officers.

Hearing no discussion, a vote was taken and Senators approved the stipends as recommended by the committee.

7. Procedures for Election of 2020-21 Student Senate Officers and Committee Members (Information)

Amy Ma, chair, Student Senate Consultative Committee (SSCC) and Student Senate

1. Chair will call for nominations for the position.
 - a. Any 2020-21 Student Senator may nominate another Student Senator
 - b. Any 2020-21 Student Senator may nominate themselves
2. Chair will close nominations.
3. Each nominee will have 90 seconds to address the body.
 - a. Nominees may use this time to state their case for holding the position.
 - b. Nominees may not use their time to disparage any other nominee or Student Senator.
 - c. Senate staff will keep time and assist in signaling when time is up.
4. Any 2020-21 Student Senator may ask a question of the nominees.
 - a. There will be a limit of two questions, (first come, first serve) as recognized by the chair.
5. A vote will take place via electronic ballot on Zoom.
 - a. All voting Student Senators will vote for the name of their preferred candidate on the ballot and submit it to Senate staff.
 - b. The Senator with the most votes will be named the winner of the position.
6. If there is only one nominee for a position, the body may forego the use of paper ballots and conduct the election via a voice vote.

8. Election of 2020-21 Student Senate/Student Senate Consultative Committee Chair (Action)

Election by 2020-21 Student Senators only

Briggs Tople was elected chair of the Student Senate/Student Senate Consultative Committee for 2020-21.

9. Election of 2020-21 Student Senate/Student Senate Consultative Committee Vice Chair (Action)

Election by 2020-21 Student Senators only - Must be a constituent of a different student governance organization than the chair. In the event that no one is nominated for the vice chair position from a different student governance organization, the position will be open to all qualified members of the Student Senate.

Gunnar Frahm was elected vice chair of the Student Senate/Student Senate Consultative Committee for 2020-21.

10. Election of 2020-21 Student Senate/Student Senate Consultative Committee Ranking Student Senator (Action)

Election by 2020-21 Student Senators only - open to any Student Senator.

Sydney Bauer was elected ranking student senator of the Student Senate/Student Senate Consultative Committee for 2020-21.

11. Election of 2020-21 Student Committee on Committees Members (Action)

Election by 2020-21 Student Senators only - Two (2) members total - One (1) system campus senator, and one (1) Twin Cities senator

For Information: The Student Committee on Committees shall be composed of 5 elected students. Of the 5 student members:

- Three shall be elected by the Student Senate Consultative Committee from among their members.
 - Of these three members, at least one must be from the Twin Cities campus and at least one must be from a system campus. This election will take place at the May Student Senate Consultative Committee meeting.
- The remaining two members shall be elected from among the student senators by the Student Senate at their final meeting of the academic year. One seat is designated for a system campus student senator and the second seat is designated for a Twin Cities campus student senator.

Scott Petty was elected as a Twin Cities senator to the Student Committee on Committees for 2020-21. No student senator from a system campus was nominated to the Student Committee on Committees and the position will be filled at a later date.

12. Election of 2020-21 Twin Cities Members of the Student Senate Nominating Subcommittee (*Action*)

Election by 2020-21 Twin Cities Student Senators only - Two (2) members total - One (1) TC undergraduate senator, and one (1) TC graduate or professional senator

For Information: The Student Senate Nominating Subcommittee shall be composed of:

- Student Senate/SSCC Chair
- Student Senate/SSCC Vice Chair
- One additional Twin Cities member of the SSCC elected by the SSCC
- One Twin Cities graduate/professional student senator elected by the Student Senate
- One Twin Cities undergraduate student senator elected by the Student Senate

If the Student Senate/SSCC Chair and/or Student Senate/SSCC Vice Chair positions are held by a non-Twin Cities student, then the SSCC will elect additional Twin Cities SSCC members to serve on the subcommittee in lieu of these positions.

Emma Flynn and Sarani Rangarajan were elected to the Student Senate Nominating Subcommittee for 2020-21.

13. Election of One Twin Cities Senator to the M Dining Student Advisory Committee (*Action*)

Election by 2020-21 Twin Cities Student Senators only

Jack Flom was elected to the M Dining Student Advisory Committee for 2020-21.

14. 2020-21 Student and University Senate Meeting Dates (*Information*)

The Student Senate and University Senate meetings for 2020-21 will take place on the following dates, starting at 11:30 a.m.:

November 5, 2020

December 3, 2020

February 25, 2021

March 25, 2021

April 22, 2021

15. Old Business

There was no old business.

16. New Business

There was no new business.

17. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 1:49 p.m.

Chris Kwapick
University Senate Office