

Minutes\*

**Faculty Consultative Committee  
Fall Retreat  
Wednesday-Thursday, August 26-27, 2009  
Minnesota Humanities Center**

Present: Marti Hope Gonzales (chair), Melissa Anderson, Nancy Carpenter, Carol Chomsky, Chris Cramer, Janet Fitzakerley, Kathryn Hanna, Caroline Hayes, Emily Hoover, Brian Isetts, Walt Jacobs, Jeff Kahn, Russell Luepker, Jan McCulloch, Michael Oakes, Martin Sampson, Kate VandenBosch, Cathrine Wambach, Becky Yust

Absent: Shawn Curley

Guests: President Robert Bruininks, Provost E. Thomas Sullivan, Senior Vice President Frank Cerra, Vice President Karen Himle, Vice President Tim Mulcahy, Vice President Richard Pfutzenreuter, Vice President Steven Rosenstone, Deans Brian Atwood, Steven Crouch, Alison Davis-Blake, Tom Fisher, Allen Levine, James Parente, Jean Quam, David Wippman; Ann Freeman (University Relations), Assistant Vice President Sharon Paulsen (Office of the Provost); Lynn Zentner (Compliance Office)

Other: Kathryn Stuckert (Office of the President)

[In these minutes: (1) amendment to policy on makeup work (to deal with the flu); (2) discussion with selected deans; (3) conflict-of-interest issues; (4) discussion with President Bruininks; (5) financing the future and the budget cliff; (6) discussion with Provost Sullivan; (7) update on graduate education; (8) discussion with Vice President Mulcahy; (9) FCC discussion; (10) discussion with Senior Vice President Cerra; (11) discussion with Vice President Himle and Ms. Freeman]

[Note: all of the guests were informed the discussions would be off the record and that a note of the issues discussed would appear in the minutes.]

**1. Amendment to Policy on Makeup Work**

Professor Gonzales convened the meeting at 8:30 on August 26 and asked the Committee first to dispense with an urgent piece of policy business. Given that the medical establishment has asked that individuals who have, or suspect they have, H1N1 flu not go to the doctor or Boynton Health Service (because they will be overwhelmed), the Committee agreed to amend the policy on makeup work as follows (new language is underlined):

3. A student must notify instructors of circumstances identified in (1) as soon as possible and provide documentation to the instructor to verify the reason for the absence. In the event that the University declares a pandemic emergency (e.g., flu), the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost or designee may waive the requirement that students are required to have documentation from a physician for illness.

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\* 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 represents the views of, nor are they binding on, the Senate, the Administration, or the Board of Regents.

Acting on behalf of the Faculty Senate, the Committee voted unanimously in favor of the amendment.

Professor Wambach and others emphasized that faculty will need to be flexible in planning their courses and anticipating absences. Chairs also need to notify faculty that they do not have the authority to cancel classes; only the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost has that authority. Professor Oakes cautioned that there are no easy answers (e.g., for lab courses), and that the University does not know when a vaccine will arrive or how it will be administered. Professor Sampson observed that a number of faculty may feel that their courses cannot accomplish what is usual and will have to adjust expectations.

The Committee also suggested a centralized computer registry where students could indicate they were out because of the flu.

## **2. Discussion with Selected Deans**

Professor Gonzales welcomed Deans Brian Atwood, Steven Crouch, Alison Davis-Blake, Tom Fisher, Allen Levine, James Parente, Jean Quam, and David Wippman to the meeting. The Committee and the deans touched on a number of topics during their two-hour discussion:

- the implications of the budget cuts and information about the steps that will be needed as the University approaches the 2012 budget "cliff";
- the need for further deliberation about what higher education, the University, and the individual colleges should look like in the future (e.g., 2015), and about the core values that should shape the University and colleges, in light of the budgetary challenges;
- the transparency and accountability of the cost pools;
- the size and scale of the University vis-à-vis its revenues;
- the relative number of graduate/professional students and undergraduate students compared to the University's peers (Minnesota has a markedly higher percentage of the former);
- e-education; and
- the cost of research.

The deans also gave the Committee advice on what it could do to further appropriate actions for the University to take in light of the impending budget problems.

Professor Gonzales thanked the deans for joining the retreat.

## **3. Conflict of Interest Issues**

Professor Gonzales welcomed Ms. Zentner to the meeting to discuss compliance and conflict-of-interest (COI) issues.

Ms. Zentner reviewed the evolution of her office and its responsibilities, COI training initiative and a COI database, and the link between the REPA and COI. She spoke about how her office intends to improve the monitoring of COI management plans and how they hope to be able to improve on the process of identifying potential COIs. She assured the Committee, in response to a discussion about the process, that she does not want her office to become a police operation but instead wishes (1) to be a resource for the faculty and (2) to protect both individuals and the institution.

Ms. Zentner also explained the evolution of the work on the COI policy; the Committee spoke with her about the urgent need for the policy and the public perceptions of the University in light of recent news coverage of possible COIs. And the need for the University to have the right information; it cannot say it did not know. The potential conflict between the Minnesota Data Practices Act and the public's wish to know were also considered.

The Committee also discussed briefly the case of Dr. Polly.

Professor Gonzales thanked Ms. Zentner for joining the retreat.

#### **4. Discussion with President Bruininks**

Professor Gonzales welcomed the President to the retreat. He and the Committee touched on a number of issues:

- the signal importance of faculty leadership during the next couple of years as the University must scrutinize itself in light of the budget situation;
- financing the future of the University and how the topic may dominate many discussions this year;
- the need for faculty help in developing an appropriate COI policy to govern the necessary and desirable relationships with business and industry and in considering the demands of the curriculum vis-à-vis graduation rates and hurdles to graduation;
- the need for metrics and measures at the institutional level as well as for academic and support units;
- the future of the Academic Health Center and the Medical School; and
- the leadership transition that will occur in a couple of years.

#### **5. Financing the Future and the Budget Cliff**

Professor Gonzales now welcomed Provost Sullivan and Vice Presidents Pfitzenreuter and Rosenstone to discuss financing the future of the University and the 2012 budget cliff. Vice President Rosenstone reviewed with the Committee the work of an ad hoc committee consider future financing. Several topics were covered:

- the need to create a shared understanding across the University of the new financial reality and creating a sense of urgency and an understanding that "business as usual" will not work;
- how to engage the faculty and others who are necessary to be active in doing the work the change will require;
- the trend lines in the University's revenue sources (e.g., tuition now exceeds state funding);
- the need for models of what the University might look like in the future, given the financial situation—more private, more outreach, the same, etc.; and
- the process to be used to make cuts and the consultation that will occur along the way.

Professor Gonzales thanked the President and the vice presidents for joining the retreat for this initial discussion of financial issues.

## **6. Discussion with Provost Sullivan**

The Committee and the Provost discussed, among other things:

- the process that will be used to identify the cuts that will be needed, given budget realities;
- how interdisciplinary programs will be considered in the process;
- the impact of the budget model on duplication of efforts/services;
- how to set priorities across colleges/units;
- the need to involve junior faculty to an appropriate extent in the deliberations about the vision of the future of the units;
- the need for principles to guide the discussions (e.g., the seven criteria that have been used to judge programs); and
- the conflict between being a good citizen of the University and the pressures created by the budget model.

## **7. Update on Graduate Education**

Professor Gonzales welcomed Vice President Mulcahy, who joined Provost Sullivan to discuss the current status of graduate education and the Graduate School. A number of points were covered.

- Provost Sullivan and Vice President Mulcahy meet once per week on Graduate School issues and Vice President Mulcahy meets with Graduate School staff.
- Dean Marilyn Speedie (Pharmacy) is chairing the dean search, which is going very well. They expect to make an appointment in early October.

- They have established working teams to address issues raised in the report on graduate education. One team is addressing academic issues (program and block grants, program reviews, etc.); the other is looking at student issues (recruitment through graduation). Both groups will be asked for metrics and measures.
- The diversity function in the Graduate School has moved to Vice President Barceló's office and postdoc oversight and support has moved to Vice President Mulcahy's office.

Other points touched on were these:

- reductions in staff and savings to be achieved as well as staff morale issues;
- the need to move to more paperless transactions;
- participation by the institutional governance system
- the impact of tuition increases on TA budgets, and on RAs; and
- the balance between graduate/professional students and undergraduates.

Professor Gonzales thanked the Provost for joining the retreat.

## **8. Discussion with Vice President Mulcahy**

The Committee and Vice President Mulcahy discussed a number of subjects:

- what the University should look like 10 years hence, including whether there should be less/more research and less/more of a loss on indirect-cost funds;
- the need to articulate better why what the University does adds value for the State;
- intellectual property issues and income generated from royalties/patents;
- research ethics and "reputational hits" to the University, tolerance for risk, compliance, and ethical training of graduate students; and
- expectations of faculty (carrying out their own clerical and secretarial tasks) and potential changes in workload so burdens decline and faculty can allocate more time to research and education.

Professor Gonzales thanked Vice President Mulcahy for joining the retreat.

## **9. FCC Discussion**

Professor Gonzales convened the second day of the retreat at 8:30 on August 27. Committee members reviewed what they had heard and learned the previous day and identified several issues on

which they wish to focus during the year, including how to develop (and to consult on) proposals to narrow the scope of the University's mission and what standards might be used to make the required judgments. The discussion touched on identifying what the University wants to be, how various approaches to making cuts could be flawed, whether or not external academic experts might be used, the need to avoid "me" versus "you" deliberations, the need and desire (or not) to use metrics to evaluate units, the expense of research universities, the cost of programs, and whether some units might no longer do research, the need for the University to be nimble (e.g., in changing programs), and the need for units with significant service/outreach missions to articulate their importance to the land-grant mission.

#### **10. Discussion with Senior Vice President Cerra**

Professor Gonzales welcomed Dr. Cerra to the retreat. Dr. Cerra spoke with the Committee about:

- how the Medical School is going in terms of budget and finances, personnel, and structure (it will be smaller and more focused within a couple of years and will have a balanced budget without recurring shortfalls, unless hit with additional large cuts in support in 2012 or thereafter);
- how the new Biomedical Discovery District buildings (north and east of the new football stadium) will be filled (about 120 PIs, 60 new and 60 from the current faculty);
- the need to use faculty talent ("there is so much talent in the University not captured for the business of the University");
- conflict of interest and the need for clarity, transparency, and accountability in faculty relationships with companies, and the need for three parties to participate in the discussion [the academic community (what does it want to disclose?), the public (which wants to know about the relationships), and the institution itself];
- the relationship of the Academic Health Center with Fairview Health Services and with the Rochester campus;
- succession issues; and
- promotion issues related to Clinical Scholars and the appointment of a task force to consider their appointment and promotion.

Professor Gonzales thanked Dr. Cerra for joining the retreat.

#### **11. Discussion with Vice President Himle and Ms. Freeman**

Professor Gonzales welcomed Vice President Himle and Ms. Freeman to talk about internal communication. The discussion covered a number of matters:

- the importance of internal communication on her agenda right now;

- leadership transitions and the role of her office (when a CEO retires, typically the stock in a corporation goes down, and she would like to do all she can to avoid any loss to the University's reputation when a transition occurs);
- the lack of public trust in large organizations of any kind, and the importance of the University pulling itself together over the next 30 months (to which internal communication will be key);
- how one will know when internal communication has improved ("you will know when it works better for you: you receive the information you need, in a timely way, and can understand it");
- the need to identify on messages who received it so that people know to whom they might/should wish to forward it;
- the extent to which her office should be involved in discussions about "reputational hits" to the University, both before and after the fact, and the organizational structure of external-relations offices at the University (it now looks as though one hand does not know what the other is doing, and combining offices would likely save money—but even if doing so cost more, it would be worth it because the reputational hits cost a lot);
- relationships with the coordinate campuses; and
- plans in her office to make use of social-networking sites (there is a faculty-staff Twitter page).

Professor Gonzales thanked Vice President Himle and Ms. Freeman for joining the retreat, and then adjourned it at noon.

-- Gary Engstrand

University of Minnesota