

Minutes*

Faculty Consultative Committee
Thursday, April 8, 1999
11:00 - 1:00
Room 626 Campus Club

Present: Sara Evans (chair), Kent Bales, Mary Dempsey, Marilyn Grave, Stephen Gudeman, David Hamilton, M. Janice Hogan, Roberta Humphreys, Michael Korth, Leonard Kuhi, Fred Morrison, V. Rama Murthy

Absent: Linda Brady, Gary Davis, Marvin Marshak, Judith Martin, Matthew Tirrell

Guests: Karen Dewanz, Michele Gross (Grants Management)

Other: none

[In these minutes: AHC workshops on consultation; grants management oversight reports; policy on eligibility to be a principal investigator; policy on education in the responsible conduct of sponsored research; a payroll matter for B faculty; an arts, sciences, and engineering faculty consultative body]

1. AHC Workshop Report

Professor Evans convened the meeting at 11:00 and began by reporting on the first of the three workshops on consultation that had been held in the Academic Health Center. Most of those who participated turned in evaluation forms, and those who participated said it went extremely well. The President spoke fervently about consultation, and quoted AAUP principles; Senior Vice President Cerra made it clear that the AHC could not have business as usual, that faculty must be engaged and shared governance must be real. The Committee discussed briefly how the workshops were conducted and what might be changed.

2. Grants Management Oversight Reports

Professor Evans turned to Professor Hamilton at this point, who introduced two colleagues from the grants management project, Karen Dewanz and Michele Gross. The reports being presented today are part of the Sponsored Projects Management Program, evolving tools to let faculty and administrators manage their grants. These are extremely important reports, he said, because earlier reports on grants have never been accurate and never been used, which led to the creation of shadow systems, which were also not always accurate and were not official. He has found that these reports are essential in managing a grant, and he also discovered from the reports a significant number of errors in how the grant was being administered--errors which can now be fixed.

Ms. Gross reviewed with the Committee the several reports that will be available to administrators and principal investigators.

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These two individuals, Professor Hamilton advised the Committee, did all this work on these reports in addition to their regular responsibilities, did an outstanding job, and brought the project to fruition.

Professor Morrison inquired how big the system capacity was. The reports are dynamic, Professor Hamilton said; they are not stored, but rather pull numbers from the data warehouse. Would it be possible, Professor Morrison asked, to make everything in the University a grant, and run the entire budget through the grants management system that has now been created, and eliminate accounting? This is SO MUCH superior to what one can get from CUFS, he concluded, that it should replace it.

The data come from CUFS, Ms. Dewanz pointed out. CUFS is the equivalent of Fortran, Professor Morrison replied; it can be in the deep background, but should not be used for reporting any more.

Professor Morrison asked about the certified approvers: has any provision been made for collective certified approval (e.g., for units that may only one or a few grants). It is all done electronically, Professor Hamilton said; the certified approver can be in Bemidji or Boca Raton. The grants management people will help units join with others in the process. Rumors about the certified approvers have already spread, he noted; they will NOT deal with every transaction on a grant. There is a risk threshold, and there will not be a need for hundreds of certified approvers.

Professor Humphreys said she had been told that people would have to take a 40-hour course and pass an exam, and would have to be re-certified every three years, as a department head, in order to sign documents. Professor Hamilton said that was absolutely incorrect. People in SPA will be put in place to handle this for departments and colleges. The department heads need to know what they are dealing with, but for everyday activities, 90% will not meet the risk threshold and business can be conducted the way it is now.

(Professor Evans at this point excused herself from the meeting in order to attend the Regents' meetings; Professor Morrison took over the responsibilities of the chair.)

There will be training for deans and department heads, Professor Hamilton affirmed. Deans are an important part of the approvals. Department heads and faculty may gang up on the administration to get what they want; in some cases, if the administrator will not do what is asked, they get fired or pass the issue on to ORTTA. Now, the associate deans will play a major role in approvals, and certified approvers report to both department heads and associate deans, and the two must work out any disagreements. There will be training for certified approvers, not department heads, and department heads will not be expected to be certified approvers (although nothing will preclude them from doing so). Units will be able to set up a process that is most efficient for them, but they want to be sure that the certified approvers meet the criteria needed to make decisions.

The system depends on accurate entry of data, Professor Hamilton agreed.

The Committee then discussed with Professor Hamilton the possibility of making a similarly user-friendly system available for other University financial transactions. The software for the grants management reports cannot be used for other department functions. At the same time, Professor

Gudeman observed, CUFS is not useful, and it is puzzling that the University has never provided a format for departments to keep track of their budgets.

There are two choices, Professor Morrison opined. Either CUFS could be replaced completely, or it could be put deep in the background, with formats like the grant management report used for departments and other purposes. That may be the best long-term solution.

Professor Morrison thanked Mss. Dewanz and Gross, and Professor Hamilton, for the marvelous results they had achieved.

3. Principal Investigator Eligibility on Sponsored Research Projects

Professor Evans turned next to Professor Kuhi to review the draft policy on principal investigator eligibility. Professor Kuhi noted that the policy has been through the rounds of the committees over the last year, and has been approved by the Senate Research Committee, the Senate Committee on Faculty Affairs, and the General Counsel's office.

Professor Kuhi then reviewed the elements of the draft report. One thing they have tried to keep straight and separate is PI status and the approval of grants. Regular faculty are automatically eligible to serve as PIs; others may serve as PIs, with required approvals that are set forth in the policy. Grants are independent of PI status, and a grant does not commit the University to the future employment of someone granted PI status.

Determination of PI status (other than for regular faculty) rests with the department head or dean, who must make a judgment about the individual's ability to serve as a PI (scientific/technical leadership and administrative skills are primary criteria). Approval of proposals depends on several factors, including space and resources necessary to complete a project.

The policy also includes other regulations, providing: that grants are to the University (not the individual), the appointment document governs the relationship of the individual to the University (not the grant or project), affirmative action policies apply, and PI status may be rescinded for just cause.

Professor Kuhi noted that departments may impose MORE stringent standards than those set out in this policy, but may not have less stringent standards. The example of an individual who had kept employed for a number of years by continuing to obtain grants was recited. Professor Hogan pointed out that departments need to be quite careful in granting PI status; in her unit, every PI status for a grant must be approved (i.e., being granted PI status for one grant does not license someone to then seek other grants).

After modest last-minute amendments to clarify the intent of the policy in one place, the Committee concluded it favored the policy for placement on the docket.

4. A Payroll Question

Members of the Committee discussed when faculty on the 9-month payroll would receive their first paycheck in the fall, after conversion to semesters. It was thought that since faculty are expected back on campus on August 23, which is the middle of a 2-week pay period, they would not receive their

first check until September 29: rather than issue a check for one week of a pay period, it was thought that a decision had been made to wait and issue a combined check for the second week of the August 23-September 3 pay period and the full September 6-17 pay period (issued 10 days later, on September 29).

Inasmuch as this would mean a considerable delay for faculty on 9-month appointments, Professor Gudeman agreed that the Committee on Finance and Planning would investigate the issue.

5. Policy on Education in the Responsible Conduct of Sponsored Research and Grants Management

Professor Kuhl then reported on the second policy before the Committee, which he said arose directly from the University's exceptional status with NIH. NIH was concerned that there was no systematic process to train PIs and researchers; the proposed policy says there will be a system in place and establishes guidelines on how it will operate.

Professor Hamilton explained that this policy essentially recognizes what is already the practice. He affirmed, in response to a question, that it will work across all disciplines.

6. Tenure Amendments; Docket

The Committee reviewed briefly proposed amendments to the tenure code, which Professor Morrison described as non-controversial. The Committee thereupon approved the Faculty Senate docket.

7. Arts, Sciences, and Engineering FCC

Professor Morrison now drew the attention of Committee members to a proposed Twin Cities Campus Assembly bylaw amendment which would create an arts, sciences, and engineering Faculty Consultative Committee of 10 members, to meet quarterly with the deans, once per year with the Twin Cities campus Provost, and would be appointed by the collegiate consultative committees or their equivalents in General College, the College of Biological Sciences, the Institute of Technology, and the College of Liberal Arts.

A number of points were raised in the ensuing discussion.

-- Do the faculty of the four colleges want this committee? It seems less likely that faculty in the professional and other colleges feel a need for such a group. Professor Humphreys explained that there had been a meeting with representatives of the college consultative committees earlier in the week, and this proposal was a slight adaptation of a proposal made by the IT Consultative Committee. The deans of the colleges are also said to favor appointment of the group.

-- The task force on faculty consultation recommended abolishing all three of the former provostal FCCs; what has happened is that one has been retained (in the Academic Health Center) and two are not functioning [although all three remain chartered in the bylaws of the Twin Cities Campus Assembly]. It is probable the group proposed will be unstable, and others may seek to have similar groups established (e.g., in the former Institute of Agriculture). Does the Committee want to create these groups in the bylaws of the Assembly, or simply propose a bylaw providing that FCC may establish collaborative

consultative arrangements, so that bylaw changes are not needed for each of them? (It was said that this would not happen without a charter from the Assembly.)

-- Given the current administrative structure of the University, the proposal may not solve the problem of providing a voice to the arts, sciences, and engineering faculty. The problem lies in the administrative structure, not with the faculty. This proposal does not provide faculty participation in central decision-making.

-- The proposed body would meet only annually with the Provost, whereas the AHC FCC meets regularly with the Senior Vice President for the AHC. This does not accomplish faculty participation. This would be easier to deal with if there were a system administration

-- The group would present issues of concern to faculty in the "core" units to the four deans all together. The deans meet regularly, and this would be a way to provide faculty views; the exchange would benefit the deans. One dean indicated he needed such a group.

-- Has faculty governance ever sat back and looked at what organization structure it wants for the University? That would be the most powerful statement it could make; it have an organization it wanted, and then could structure a governance system. If the faculty cannot say something about the administration, who can? Another Committee member maintained that the President has the right to structure the administration however he wishes, and the governance structure should not try to do so. Another observed that the governance system DID push in the 1980s to change the administration, which led to the appointment of Anne Hopkins as Associate Vice President for the Arts, Sciences, and Engineering.

-- This proposal could lead to an endless number of FCCs in the University; this may not be the way to go. Would these groups work in parallel, and provide the administration multiple sources of advice?

-- The attempt is to link the college FCCs, the deans, and the Senate to create communication between the different levels.

It was agreed that the proposal is not ready to be forwarded for additional review. Later in the meeting, it was suggested that Professor Evans forward the proposal to the college consultative committees for their reaction to it.

Professor Evans returned in time to adjourn the meeting at 1:15.

-- Gary Engstrand

University of Minnesota