

Health Sciences Student Consultative Committee (HS SCC)
October 28, 2020
Minutes of the Meeting

These minutes reflect discussion and debate at a meeting of a committee of the University of Minnesota Senate; none of the comments, conclusions, or actions reported in these minutes reflect the views of, nor are they binding on, the senate, the administration, or the Board of Regents.

[In these minutes: Election of HS SCC Chair; Orientation and Overview of University Senate Governance; Updates from the Office of Academic Health Sciences; Discussion on a Petition for S/N Grading Option for Fall 2020 Semester]

PRESENT: Savannah Middlestead (chair), Melissa Ferguson, Laesia Jimenez, Grace Eang, Jenny Fournier, Sarah Alabsi, Sruthi Shankar, Rachel Hugenroth, Tingyoung Ou, Cynthia Pando

REGRETS: Gracie Comeau, Panhia Her, Molly Palecek, Stephany Beaulieu

ABSENT: None

GUESTS: Trevor Ames, associate vice president, Academic Health Sciences; Zayna Jan, student, School of Dentistry

OTHERS: Laura Dammer Hess, Rachel Hansen

Chris Kwapick, senate associate, University Senate Office, welcomed the committee and members introduced themselves.

1. Election of HS SCC Chair - Savannah Middlestead was elected chair of the HS SCC for the 2020-21 academic year.

2. Orientation and Overview of University Senate Governance - Kwapick then provided an overview, including a [slide deck](#), on University Senate governance as well as the [HS SCC's committee charge](#).

3. Updates from the Office of Academic Health Sciences - Trevor Ames, associate vice president, Academic Health Sciences, provided an update to the committee on the happenings in the Health Sciences, which included the following:

- New security measures will be implemented in the health sciences building complex, including the new Health Sciences Education Center (HSEC), which includes exclusive lounge space for health sciences students through the Center for Health Interprofessional Programs (CHIP).
- New wellbeing initiatives will be introduced at the HSEC that students may access.
- CHIP will be hosting a virtual Clinician Administrator Relationship Improvement Organization (CLARION) competition and students can register online if they wish to participate.

- CLARION participation can count toward a new initiative called the Interprofessional Scholars Program.
- The health sciences will be working to make sure that students are following masking and social distancing guidelines at all times.

Sarah Alabsi commented that the Medical Student Council met last night about this issue and are jointly drafting a letter to the class to strongly encourage students to strictly follow the public health safety guidelines. Ames agreed that students would react better to this suggestion if it comes from peers rather than the administration.

4. Discussion on a Petition for S/N Grading Option for Fall 2020 Semester - Middlestead introduced Zayna Jan, student, School of Dentistry, who provided a presentation on a [petition](#) she created asking the University to provide a S/N (pass/fail) grading option for students until the COVID-19 pandemic is over. Jan stated that S/N grading will allow students to have the option to lessen the pressure of grades during this extraordinarily difficult time. She further added that the petition has garnered over 1,000 signatures and has been endorsed by multiple groups, including the Minnesota Student Association (MSA).

Jan explained that the petition had been sent to President Joan Gabel, who has subsequently asked for advice from the Senate Committee on Educational Policy (SCEP), with the final decision being made by Executive Vice President and Provost Rachel Croson. Jan indicated that any opposition to this change, according to Croson, ultimately deals with issues of accreditation. Sruthi Shankar commented that the Medical School moved to S/N grading a few years ago and has been successful in mitigating the added stress of class ranking. Cynthia Pando added that the School of Public Health's senate is working on a similar proposal and would likely support this petition as well.

Middlestead moved that the committee endorse the petition. **Hearing no further discussion, a vote was taken, and the motion was unanimously approved.**

Hearing no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Chris Kwapick
University Senate Office