

Faculty Consultative Committee (FCC)
May 16, 2019
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:** IT Governance Discussion; Office of Human Resources Policy Consultation; Miscellaneous Committee Business; Liberal Education Redesign Committee Update]

PRESENT: Amy Pittenger (chair), Sheri Breen, Phil Buhlmann (vice chair), Tabitha Grier-Reed, Lynn Lukkas, Ned Patterson, Eric Watkins, Robert Blair, Frank Gigler, Jennifer Goodnough, Jessica Larson, Peh Ng, Donna Spannaus-Martin, Philip Zelazo, Catherine French

REGRETS: Colleen Flaherty Manchester, Sue Chu, Peggy Nelson, Les Drewes, Wendy St. Peter

GUESTS: Stephen Perkins, business relationship manager, Office of Information Technology; Larry Storey, business relationship manager, Office of Information Technology; Vice President for Human Resources Kathy Brown; Professor Sally Kohlstedt, co-chair, Liberal Education Redesign Committee; Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Education Robert McMaster

1. **IT governance discussion:** Professor Pittenger called the meeting to order and welcomed those present. In light of time constraints, Professor Pittenger dispensed with introductions and turned to Office of Information Technology business relationship managers Larry Storey and Stephen Perkins who requested to be on today's FCC agenda. Mr. Storey noted that the Office of Information Technology (OIT) has an annual information technology (IT) governance process, which has been in existence for about seven years. In addition to the governance process where IT representatives meet with various groups across campus to solicit input on OIT and how it is doing, OIT also conducts an annual survey to solicit further input. That said, he asked members to share information about the goals they are trying to accomplish and what IT-related obstacles they are encountering. A summary of the feedback is below:

- There is interest in OIT providing more technology recommendations and standards for teaching. OIT, explained Mr. Storey, is in the process of developing a catalogue of all the technologies that are being used across the institution and who is using them.
- Canvas-related issues:
 - There is interest in best practice resources for Canvas.
 - There have been incidents with grades being altered after uploading them from Canvas to PeopleSoft.
 - The process for allowing third-party tools in Canvas is confusing and not transparent. Mr. Storey responded that there is a committee that is working on developing more transparency around what tools are being integrated into Canvas,

what tools are in the queue to be integrated, and what tools are being considered for integration.

- There is interest in a progress update regarding OIT's unification attempts to bring together various teaching support resources in one place. Mr. Storey said IT created a Community of Practice (CoP) about three years ago that was looking into this matter. He said he will look into this further and report back his findings about the status of this initiative. In the meantime, he said individuals can always email help@umn.edu or call 1-HELP for assistance.
- There is interest in having greater clarity around why the University decided to implement [Chrome River](#), an expense management software.
- There is frustration with the search engine feature on One Stop. A number of members feel that Google provides better search results than One Stop. Mr. Storey said he believes this is a University Relations issue because they determine how this tool functions.
- IT purchasers need to consider all University campuses when purchasing software licenses and implementing new software.

Professor Pittenger thanked Mr. Storey and Mr. Perkins for soliciting FCC member's feedback about the University's technology products and services. In turn, Mr. Storey thanked the committee for the opportunity to have this discussion. If members think of additional things they would like to share after this meeting, Mr. Storey encouraged them to contact him directly.

2. Office of Human Resources policy consultation: Professor Pittenger welcomed Vice President for Human Resources Kathy Brown who asked to be on the FCC agenda to consult on two policies that are undergoing comprehensive review. The two policies are:

- Paid Medical Leave & Disability Benefits for Faculty
- Professional Development Leaves for Academic Professional and Administrative Employees

Regarding the Professional Development Leaves for Academic Professional and Administrative Employees policy, said VP Brown, OHR is not proposing any substantive changes to this policy. If, however, members have any proposed changes they should let OHR know. The minor changes that were made to the policy were simply housekeeping changes, e.g., update phone numbers, etc.

Hearing no comments regarding the Professional Development Leaves for Academic Professional and Administrative Employees policy, VP Brown moved on to the Paid Medical Leave & Disability Benefits for Faculty policy. This policy provides faculty & P&A employees with up to two-weeks (10 days) of time off for medical reasons. With one exception, no major changes have been made to the policy. The substantive change made to the policy has to do with the definition of "immediate family member." Previously, this definition included spouses and registered same-sex domestic partners. That said, now that same-sex marriage is legal in Minnesota, the definition of "immediate family member" requires all spouses to be legally married in order to be covered by the policy. The University does not provide benefits to heterosexual or same-sex domestic partners who are not married.

Professor Goodnough pointed out that in the procedure document, the section on certifying and reporting paid medical leave, under for self and dependent child section the language has been updated (replaced faculty member or P&A with ‘the employee’), but under the immediate family member section, the same change has not been made. Is this a change that should have been made or not? If not, is there an implied difference for the immediate family member? VP Brown said she does not believe there is an implied difference, and agreed to look into this after the meeting.

Professor French commented that the P&A medical leave is very liberal and cited an example. Because P&A employees do not have to record sick time for their absences when they are ill, and are not required to provide documentation of their illness/condition, how should a situation of excessive absenteeism be handled. Occasionally, said VP Brown, employees abuse sick time, and she agreed that this is a gap area in the policy. In situations like this, units should monitor the absences and chart the reasons the employee gives for his/her absence. Beyond the 10-days of paid sick leave (need not be contiguous) for P&A employees, the unit has the right to ask for medical documentation. Professor Buhlmann suggested that the fact that the 10-days of sick leave need not be contiguous be clarified in the revised policy. VP Brown agreed to look into this further.

Hearing no further questions, VP Brown thanked FCC members for their time.

3. Committee business: Professor Pittenger provided the committee with the following updates:

Regarding the inauguration of President-Designate Gabel, said Professor Pittenger, the first person in the inauguration procession is a faculty member who carries a ceremonial mace. She noted that at President Kaler’s inauguration he selected Professor Frank Bates, his friend, to carry the mace. Professor Pittenger said President-Designate Gabel has asked for the FCC’s help in identifying a nomination and selection process for this ceremonial role. After some discussion, the FCC came up with the following ideas:

- Vice chair of the Senate
- FCC chair
- A Regents Professor
- An award-winning faculty member
- A system campus faculty member

Professor Goodnough pointed out that tying the ceremonial role to a position might be precedent setting, and future president’s may prefer to choose their own person like President Kaler did. Secondly, she suggested thinking about someone who would be representative of the faculty at large such as one of the authors of the report by the Task Force on Building Names and Institutional History, or a newly tenured faculty member, to name a few.

Professor Pittenger thanked members for their ideas. Professor French suggested providing President-Designate Gabel with the ideas that were generated and to let her choose, which Professor Pittenger thought was a good idea.

Moving on, Professor Pittenger reported that the provost search is launching tomorrow, Friday, May 17. With that said, she asked for members help with possible interview questions for the candidates, particularly as it relates to questions that would get at how a person values the fine arts because there are no members on the search committee from this field. Professor Lukkas, Department of Art chair, volunteered to give this some thought and do her best to come up with some questions.

Professor Pittenger also reported that she and Professor Buhlmann will meet with Provost Hanson tomorrow to continue to explore a potential FCC/Provost Office co-sponsored forum/fora concerning the University's history and how historical research is conducted. She said she and Professor Buhlmann have mixed feelings about holding an event like this because of the sensitive nature of this issue and the Board's decision not to rename four University buildings; however, there are members of the Task Force on Building Names and Institutional History who want such an event. Professor Pittenger said she would report back at the June 6 meeting where things are at with this matter.

Finally, regarding the August FCC retreat, Professor Pittenger said she and Professor Buhlmann are planning a half day session to talk about the possibility of combining disability services training (see [Resolution on Professional Development and Best Practices for Disability Accommodations and Supporting Students with Disabilities](#) that was approved by the Senate at its May 2019 meeting), and mental health advocacy training given that a lot of disability accommodations are mental health related. Additional retreat agenda topics include FCC composition, and academic freedom/freedom of speech. Also, on the first day of the retreat, President-Designate Gabel will meet with the FCC as well Provost Hanson. For the session with President-Designate Gabel, noted Professor Pittenger, Professor Buhlmann has suggested having the FCC share with her the three top things they would like her to understand about the University, and then give her the opportunity to ask about the three top things she would like to learn from the FCC. Professor Pittenger asked members for their thoughts on this draft agenda. Professor Gigler said he found it helpful last year to hear about the FCC's top issues for the 2018 - 2019 academic year because this helped him plan the Finance & Planning agenda for the year. Professor Pittenger said she plans to start the retreat with a governance overview and will include the big issues for the FCC for the 2019 - 2020 academic year. Professor Buhlmann said he believes in setting goals and structuring the FCC's work around these goals. What is discussed at the retreat, in Professor Buhlmann's opinion, should help set the FCC agenda for the academic year. Professor French added that it might be useful to have the FCC ex-officios (chairs of Finance & Planning, Faculty Affairs, Academic Freedom & Tenure, Educational Policy, AHC FCC and Research) share their plans for the upcoming year and the issues/topics that they foresee percolating up.

4. Liberal Education Redesign Committee Update: Professor Pittenger welcomed Professor Sally Kohlstedt, chair, Liberal Education Redesign Committee (LERC) and Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Education Bob McMaster who were invited to give a progress update on the work of LERC. Vice Provost and Dean McMaster began by saying that the decision to revisit the University's liberal education requirements was spurred by the University of Minnesota Strategic Plan where there had been a discussion about how to infuse the Grand Challenges

curriculum into the liberal education requirements. With this as the genesis, the decision was made to take a long, hard look at the curriculum being offered for today's 21st century students. He went on to say that in addition to being mindful about the cores, themes, and total credits of the new liberal education requirements, it will also be important to be mindful about the budget and transfer student implications.

After Vice Provost and Dean McMaster's opening remarks, Professor Kohlstedt acknowledged that LERC has worked hard over the past 18 months revisiting the University's liberal education curriculum. Having gone through this review process, LERC members found themselves really respecting the current curriculum, which has important elements. At the same time, however, said Professor Kohlstedt, LERC realized that the current curriculum had become somewhat routine in its implementation and that many students were viewing it as a grid that needed to be completed/fulfilled. With that said, LERC wanted to accomplish three things with the new curriculum:

- Have a clear and transparent identification for every course.
- Simplify the LE structure.
- Allow students to be more creative in choosing their LE courses by allowing more provision for exploration.

Next, Vice Provost and Dean McMaster distributed a draft framework for the new LE requirements (Plan A, Plan B, and Plan C) that LERC has been working on and Professor Kohlstedt walked members through it in a fair amount of detail. While the new model is familiar in many ways, it will have new definitions and is constructed in such a way so students can understand the breadth of what a university education can give them. To summarize, Professor Kohlstedt highlighted what is different in the new model:

- Quantitative reasoning and mathematics intensive will be a new way to think about mathematics.
- The grouping of arts, humanities and literature is different and more transparent.
- The new course descriptions are written in paragraph form rather than bullet point form. The goal is to have a committee that reviews the courses be able to read the paragraph descriptions and know whether a course meets the spirit of what should be covered in the course.
- All thematic courses will have an ethics component.

LERC is still discussing the three plans because there is some contention/disagreement about the plans. Plan A, for example, emphasizes disciplinary courses, while Plan B emphasizes thematic courses. An unresolved issue is how credits will be distributed. Under the current model (assuming no double dipping), students would take 39 credits, but if students double dip they can complete the LE requirements with 27 credits. The new curriculum will have students taking 30 credits. The average number of LE curriculum credits across the country is 30. Professor Kohlstedt went on to say that the Twin Cities campus has 154 majors, and of these 154 majors, approximately 23 or 24 majors could have trouble with this proposed model, e.g., engineering programs in particular. In looking at other institutions with engineering programs, many of them have more general curriculum requirements and they are still managing to stay within the 120 credit threshold by requiring fewer credits, but still meeting ABET standards.

Professor Kohlstedt also noted that LERC continues to think about and discuss the LE oversight, and how it should be managed. There may be different ways to review the disciplinary, thematic and fundamental courses. The goal is have a LE oversight committee that is an enabling committee that assumes each faculty member has good intentions.

The remainder of the meeting was spent addressing members detailed/specific questions, comments and suggestions as they tried to figure out how the new LE model would impact their courses, and the implications it will have for students, etc. At the end of the discussion, Professor Pittenger asked Professor Kohlstedt if it would be ok to share the schematic model that was distributed earlier in the meeting with their faculty. Professor Kohlstedt said LERC is trying to figure out the best way to communicate this model because the committee feels like someone needs to be able to explain what is being proposed. The goal is to slowly roll it out across the University community, which probably will not happen until the fall. Professor Buhlmann said he feels strongly that units need time to thoroughly think through what is being proposed and what it means for their programs; people do not want to be surprised.

Professor Pittenger thanked Professor Kohlstedt and Vice Provost and Dean McMaster for a good discussion.

5. **Adjournment:** Hearing no further business, Professor Pittenger adjourned the meeting.

Renee Dempsey
University Senate