

Minutes
Faculty Consultative Committee
Thursday, September 4, 2008
1:15 – 3:00
238A Morrill Hall

[In these minutes: (1) correction from the July 31 meeting; (2) report of the chair I (Cooperating Fund Drive); (3) discussion with the faculty legislative liaisons; (4) report of the chair II (smoke-free campus, cost pools, case studies of department budgets, continuation of the metrics & measurement subcommittee, policies to the Senates)]

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. If you have comments or suggestions about items reported on in these minutes, please use your "reply" key and the message will be forwarded to the appropriate individual(s).

Present:

Emily Hoover (chair), Nancy Carpenter, Carol Chomsky, Shawn Curley, Dan Dahlberg, William Durfee, Janet Fitzakerley, Marti Hope Gonzales, Michael Hancher, Kathryn Hanna, Carolyn Hayes, Judith Martin, Michael Oakes, Martin Sampson, Cathrine Wambach, Becky Yust

Absent:

Gary Balas, Brian Isetts, Jeff Kahn, Nelson Rhodus

Guests:

None

Other:

Kathryn Stuckert (Office of the President)

1. Correction from the July 31 Meeting

In the minutes of the July 31, 2008, meeting, Dean John Finnegan of the School of Public Health was quoted as indicating that "Facilities costs, for example, for 23% in two years" for Public Health. That was incorrect: Dean Finnegan reported that the overall cost pools rose 23% in two years and that the facilities cost pools were the only ones that went down a small amount.

2. Report of the Chair (Part I)

Professor Hoover convened the meeting at 1:15 and asked Committee members to consider names for the Nominating Committee (the body that identifies candidates for this Committee and for the Committee on Committees). It was agreed that Professor Hoover would ask the three individuals whose terms expire on 6/30/09 if they would agree to be reappointed, and the Committee identified several faculty who could be asked to be candidates for the vacant position.

Professor Chomsky next reported that she serves as the faculty ambassador for the Cooperating Fund Drive; her job is to contribute ideas to the drive and to promote it. She said she would like to take a couple of minutes at the October 2 Faculty Senate meeting to endorse and promote the drive. In the past, the amount given by the faculty has been high but the participation rate has been low compared to other employee groups. The goal this year is a participation rate of 40%; no dollar goal has been set, given that economic times are difficult for many.

Committee members raised two questions that Professor Chomsky provided firm answers for the following day via email. One was how someone would go about suggesting an additional organization that might be added to one of the Charitable Federations. The second was what happens when someone designates a particular agency that is already part of one of the Federations--the suggestion was that such a designation does not change the allocation of funds among the participants in the Federation. ("That is, if I say \$100 should go to charity X, charity X does get \$100 but that's just part of the amount charity X would otherwise get. It doesn't get \$100 more than the amount it would otherwise get from its proportionate part of the allocation.") The answers, Professor Chomsky reported, are (1) suggestions for new charities are welcome and should be made directly to the federations, using contact information that is on the Federation website and will be in the CFD brochure and (2) most emphatically yes, the charities get extra when someone designates them; that wasn't always true but is now, and has been for at least the past 10 years, for all the charities.

3. Discussion with the Faculty Legislative Liaisons

Professor Hoover turned next to Professors Sampson and Hayes to provide a description of what they do and a preview of the upcoming legislative session. It was agreed that the discussion would be off the record.

Professor Sampson summarized the work of the legislative liaisons from his perspective.

A creature of the FCC, the Faculty Legislative Liaison is chosen by the FCC and formally appointed by the President, whose budget compensates the individual's department for time devoted to this role. As you know, this year there are two of us. There is no financial augmentation for either of us from this activity, but we receive reimbursement for parking meter costs.

The concepts beneath this role include (1) on many issues a faculty voice linked to faculty governance can be distinctively helpful in explaining the university to the legislature, and (2) the FCC benefits from its own pipeline to the legislature, which in turn can be used to inform faculty of what is happening on legislation important to the university.

This starts my sixth year. Each year is distinctive, but there is a legislative rhythm of a capital investment year then a biennial budget + regents appointment year then a capital investment year, and so forth. The standard legislative activities are the biennial budget request and the biennial capital investment request. In addition, each year other legislation surfaces that is potentially important for the university.

In general, we try to attend every Higher Ed committee hearing and every Capital Investment Committee hearing that pertains to the U of M. We testify on items of particular importance to faculty (e.g., a Legislative Auditor report on how U of M salaries compare to other university salaries) and on other items where Faculty Legislative Liaison testimony can be especially helpful, such as U of M budget and capital investment requests. We also keep in touch with committee administrators and committee members.

Reporting to U of M faculty takes various forms. The liaisons keep the FCC informed about significant developments at the capitol. At each meeting of the University faculty Senate we give a brief report. During the state legislative session we also update faculty on the status of key university related bills through e mail messages.

Every two years the legislature fills some of the seats on the Board of Regents. This is a political process under the control of the legislature. As part of that process the legislature created the Regents Candidate Advisory Council to review applicants for positions on the Board of Regents. One phase of their activities is a public interview with people on the Council's short list. The legislative liaisons attend those interviews. Part of our interest is that the legislature chooses Regents from among outstanding people who have participated in these interviews rather than slipping in people who have not gone through the public process (something that has not happened during my 6 years but is a possibility). Should we need to make that argument, we can do so more effectively if we have first hand awareness of the public interviews.

Professor Hayes summarized the work of the legislative liaisons from her perspective.

Role: to act as a channel of information between the faculty and legislature that is independent of the administration, and the University lobbyist's office (Donna Peterson).

How we spend our time:

- Attend campus tours for the legislators (Fall),
- Attend meetings of the legislature (Spring)
- Tu/Th meetings of the Higher Ed and Workforce Development committee,
- Pop-up meetings, hearings, state demographer,
- Sessions of the House and Senate,
- Attend FCC meetings year-round,
- Visit coordinate campuses,
- Attend campus functions to which faculty invite legislators (Medical Devices Conference, Center for Fluid Power, etc.)
- Attend campus functions in response to legislator's requests for information (legislature requested meetings with Mechanical Engineering faculty on Energy – Oct. 2, 2008).
- Attend dinner with the Regents, FCC Retreat, etc.

Observations from this year:

-- Bio-Medical. It has been a good year for bio-medical research; the impact of medical and bio-medical research are topics that the legislature and general public can relate to and see as important to their lives.

-- Energy has emerged as a critical topic, relevant to the science (and other sectors) of the university. The rising price of oil has pushed this issue to the forefront, and it is not showing signs of going down again. Energy costs are seen as strongly impacting the economy, and the costs/budgets of all organizations in the state. Thus, the legislature and public have great interest in energy; we do great research in energy; we need to cut costs; applying energy technology can cut costs. There is a great win-win-win-win opportunity here for all, and we must move quickly to capitalize on it.

After an hour-long discussion, Professor Hoover thanked Professors Hayes and Sampson for their remarks.

4. Report of the Chair (Part II)

Professor Hoover now reviewed a number of items for information.

-- There may be a proposal coming forward for a smoke-free campus (i.e., indoors and outdoors); she will ask that the draft policy be brought to the Senate Consultative Committee (inasmuch as it would affect everyone, not just faculty).

-- The Committee will need to revisit the issues surrounding cost pools and when rates are set. The topic will be brought up when several Committee members have lunch with the deans.

-- She would like to see a small set of case studies of department budgets in order to determine whether they have as much money, more, or less than they did five or ten years ago. Committee members suggested that any study look not only at resources but how they are spent, that it be all funds, that student-credit hours and number of graduate students be included, as well as the size of the staff, and that coordinate campus departments be included. Professor Dahlberg suggested the group should perhaps be about 20 departments, one that any reasonable group of faculty would agree should be part of any major university. Professor Hoover said she would try to identify who could be asked to conduct such a study.

-- The Committee should hear from Associate Vice President Andrew Furco, who deals with civic public matters.

-- On the question of 27 pay periods in FY2010, Professor Hoover said she will ask that the issues be brought to the Senate Consultative Committee.

-- Professor Hoover said she would contact Provost Sullivan to inquire if he wished to have the metrics and measurement subcommittee continue in some form to serve as a consulting body. His remarks at the retreat suggested he may have envisioned some kind of continuing role for the subcommittee.

-- The Committee concurred with Professor Hoover that the metrics and measurement subcommittee report should be brought to the Faculty Senate. She will work with Professors Windsor and Durfee to determine to whom the recommendations of the report should be directed.

-- Professor Hoover said that one issue that needs to be dealt with is the question of which administrative policies should be brought to the Senate for action or information and which need not. There is no clear line between the categories. Professor Hoover said she would arrange a discussion with Vice President Brown, who is in charge of the policy process and final policy approval, to identify a way to decide which policies fall in which categories. Professor Chomsky suggested that Professor Hoover should make it clear to any administrators invited in the review process that there is no thought that all policies will be rewritten or that the Senate should be involved in everything, but that there needs to be clarity about what the Senate's role will be; the process should be designed to have a small group review the policies to determine what might need to be changed and start that process when appropriate.

Professor Hoover adjourned the meeting at 3:00

-- Gary Engstrand

University of Minnesota