

Senate Committee on Educational Policy
-Minutes-
April 2, 1987

ATTENDANCE: Andrew Collins (chair), Crystal Hanscome, Lawrence Goodman, Sheila Corcoran, Robert Myers, Patricia Thomas (staff), John Clark, Gretchen Kreuter (ex officio), Mary Young, Marvin Mattson.
Guests Thomas Scott, Elizabeth Grundner, Sam Lewis

MINUTES: The minutes for February 26 and March 5 were approved as written.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Andrew Collins said that Naomi Scheman has raised two issues she would like SCEP to respond to during Spring Quarter. She would like SCEP to urge departments to include in the criteria for salary increases some evidence of quality teaching. This issue will be discussed April 16. Naomi is also concerned about the requirements for transfer students and the difficulties these students might face under the changes being considered. This will be discussed in May.

Proposal for new Senate Committee on Information Systems

Professor Thomas Scott, chair of the SCEP Subcommittee on Information Systems, gave a brief history of the subcommittee and explained that Rama Murthy, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, is in charge of coordinating computers and telecommunications at the University. Vice President Murthy believes it is very important to have a Senate committee that would be responsible for computers and telecommunications systems. The Subcommittee on Information Systems also believes that there should be such an advisory committee and is asking SCEP to address the following three issues:

1. What should be the charge of this Senate committee?
2. Where does this committee fit in the overall structure of the Senate?
3. Who should be represented on the committee?

Discussion followed. Professor Scott said that the issue is not unrelated to the administrative reorganization going on at this time. It broadens the range of issues which the committee can look at, from the computer equipment used for various department activities to the Supercomputer Institute itself. It is too hard for a committee to act as an advisory or consulting body because of the difficulty in keeping members up-to-date on computer information. This Senate committee will probably be more concerned with policy issues. However, it is often hard to make a distinction between operations and policy. Rama Murthy told the subcommittee that the library system was not included in the information system at this time, but would be included later. There will be an administrative link with the libraries now.

John Clark asked what the problems are in the computer and telecommunications fields that this committee should address. Issues of cost (should it be free to users like the telephones are?), technical questions concerning the compatibility of the various kinds of hardware and software being insured by individual departments, and the impact this system will ultimately have on the user need to be discussed. Vice President Murthy told the subcommittee

that money wasn't the issue; the University is spending \$30-40 million on the system.

Robert Myers said the issue needs to be a part of the governance system because of the impact the information systems will have on educational facilities. The issue affects students and faculty, and they need to have a voice in determining the direction the systems should take. It is not just an administrative issue but parallels the Library and Research Committees.

Robert also suggested that at least some of the committee members have technical expertise so the question of feasibility could be addressed. Andrew Collins also suggested that there be a liaison with Barbara Wolfe's technical advisory committee.

Tom Scott suggested that the committee be established to handle the time-bound tasks and then evaluate it in two years. There should be communication between this committee and the Library and Research committees, and it should report to the Senate through SCEP.

Preliminary Report of the Implementation Task Force on Undergraduate Education

Gretchen Kreuter said the preliminary report was finished, and the Task Force was holding four public forums to give the greater University community a chance to respond to it. They are April 14 in the West Wing of the Campus Club, April 15 in 274 McNeal Hall, April 16 in 233 McNeal Hall on the St. Paul Campus, and April 20 in 415 Blegen on the West Bank. All meetings are from 3:15-4:30 p.m. It was strongly recommended that SCEP members attend the April 14 meeting to show interest and support in improving the quality of undergraduate education. Andy asked that SCEP members be sent copies of the report.

Class time per credit hour

Andrew Collins presented a draft statement to the members to help focus discussion. Elizabeth Grundner said that it is really difficult to get faculty to teach classes after 2:15 p.m. Most classes are offered in the morning, and this makes room scheduling very difficult. Students also have trouble scheduling classes because the classes are all clustered in the morning. She said increasing classes to four hours for a four-credit class would be unmanageable for CIA. A large percentage of 3,000 and 5,000 level courses are taught three hours per week.

Robert Myers suggested that the second action be changed to read "one class period per week for each credit granted" rather than one "class meeting..." since some class meetings are longer than one class period.

Andrew Collins asked what the classroom availability would be in a decade. Elizabeth Grundner said there should be an increase if new buildings are constructed. However, she would like to retire some lousy buildings, so the numbers of rooms will actually balance out. There should be the same number

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of sections with smaller controls. West Bank is overloaded and needs a new building. The University East Bank needs a building with large, 150-capacity classrooms and a building like Folwell with 30-35 small classrooms.

Sam Lewis said that a definite part of a resolution should include a recommendation that more small classrooms need to be constructed. He said there is also a major request in the budget to improve classrooms.

Representatives from CIA, Extension classes and Summer Session will be asked to attend the April 16 SCEP meeting.