

Minutes*

**Faculty Consultative Committee
October 28, 1992**

Present: Mario Bognanno (chair), John Adams, Judith Garrard, Karen Seashore Louis, Toni McNaron, Irwin Rubenstein, James Tracy, James VanAlstine, Shirley Zimmerman

Guests: Carl Adams (chair, Task Force on Faculty Workload Principles), Virginia Gray (Faculty Legislative Liaison)

1. Report of the Chair

Professor Bognanno convened the meeting at 1:45 and reported on several items.

- He was not aware that there would be a task force on internal consulting, as reported in BRIEF. The task force will not be appointed for the time being; Professor Bognanno said he wanted more information on the parameters within which it would operate, and it may be that solutions are within the reach of administrators right now. Dr. Infante will draft principles on internal consulting and bring them to the Committee before any additional action is taken.
- The role of the governance process in a possible switch to the semester system will be discussed with President Hasselmo.
- The report of the ad hoc FCC committee on administrator evaluation may not be ready for the November 5 meeting, but a report will be presented to the Committee as soon as possible.
- Professor Garrard wrote to the President protesting the lack of faculty members on the "steering" committee. The President told her, in response, that it was ONLY a steering committee and that plans will come from the colleges; it will be a faculty process in combination with consultation with Senate committees. It is an informal group, she was also told, and to add representatives from a variety of groups would make it unwieldy.

Professor Rubenstein reported that the Finance and Planning Committee had discussed her letter and the role of the steering committee with Senior Vice President Infante. It was not clear how college committees could plan without guidelines, nor was it clear whence the questions to be asked would come. The Finance and Planning Committee will take up questions of its own role, and the generation of the questions, at its next meeting.

One Committee member said he found the "steering" committee idea to make sense--to make sure the units plan. Faculty don't want to plan, but the best way to plan is for them to do it, not the administration. The important issue is to make sure the units do their job;

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there is no secret plan and it may not be useful to insist that faculty be on the steering committee. The faculty do not work for the President; the faculty should tell the administration what it needs to do planning and should be asserting the agenda! Another agreed, noting that the question is the role of the faculty--outside the college processes--to be involved in setting guidelines and principles; these should not be set by the steering committee.

Professor Bognanno said that he will be meeting with the President next week and will try to reach some understanding about these questions. The President will also be at the next meeting, so could also explain what he has in mind. [NOTE: The FCC minutes for November 5, forthcoming, will clarify the issues raised at this meeting about the planning process.]

2. Faculty Workload Principles

Professor Bognanno turned next to Professor Adams to report on the revision of the faculty workload principles.

Professor Adams reviewed the changes that the task force had made (e.g., elimination of the word "workload" except from the title; a new introduction on rights and responsibilities; revision in the language about 40 hours; and change in the title of the taxonomy). It was his view that the Faculty Senate should adopt the principles, not the taxonomy; it will be up to the Faculty Consultative Committee and the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs to come to agreement on the list of elements of faculty work that will be used.

There are those who argue that nothing should be said which would restrict faculty activities; they don't like these principles. There are those who argue that there should only be restrictions on output, not input (the principles should speak ONLY to accomplishments, not on how to achieve them); since the document speaks to input effort, it is seen as inappropriate by those who hold this view. Yet others distrust the administration and fear it will be used as simply another lever with the faculty. As a rough guess, Professor Adams said, there are three faculty views on the document: about 15% who oppose it, for whatever reasons; about 40% who do not want to deal with the question but who recognize the need for the principles; and about 45% who think "it's about time."

Asked if he had any sense of whether or not the principles will be used, Professor Adams said he believed the administration would implement them after adoption by the Faculty Senate.

While the narrative statement is understandable, said one Committee member, the taxonomy of faculty effort does not make sense to those outside the University; it needs an explanation of WHY faculty do those things. This is an important document, Professor Gray told the Committee; after it is adopted, there should be in each department and college a document containing the elements appropriate for that unit. When in St. Paul, she and the administration can show the documents and explain what the faculty should be doing. There is a difference, she said, between what is written for the legislature and public and what is written for internal use--and the taxonomy currently in the report is not useful to the public, nor is it intended to be. There should be, maintained one Committee member, a version of the principles for public use.

With respect to the taxonomy, Professor Adams pointed out in response to a query, the itemization follows the three broad missions of the University, plus the incorporation of administrative and governance responsibilities. A number of faculty have commented that it is nice to see such a list, because they do much of what is enumerated without being sure anyone cared or counted it; the taxonomy acknowledges their work. It also serves a useful purpose in departments, added another Committee member, because it helps decide what activities will be emphasized.

Historically the legislature has viewed the faculty as a professional guild, observed one Committee member, but that idea is losing currency. Professor Gray confirmed the observation, and said that the question of faculty workload will be a VERY BIG issue at the legislature this year. With the recent headlines about faculty wrongdoing, the legislature feels it should be controlling the situation since the faculty are not. The budget difficulties also lead to the proposition that if the faculty simply taught more, the problem would be solved. The workload document helps respond to the questions because it demonstrates that the faculty recognize their responsibilities.

"Workload" is a more honest term, one Committee member commented, and that term should be used—even if the term is deleted from the report. Professor Gray said it would be. When the legislature commissioned a study two years ago, it wanted a study of teaching load; the University was successful in changing the study to workload.

Professor Adams reported that he had asked a number of people outside the University to review the document; their response, he said, is that it is not a particularly strong statement of self-control. The importance of the issue in the legislature, and these external reactions, make it important that Professor Gray be at the Faculty Senate meeting, asserted one Committee member, because most faculty members "haven't a clue" that the legislature might consider adopting legislation which will require them to teach 12 hours per week. Such legislation, other Committee members noted, HAS been adopted in several states.

While this is a good document, reflected one Committee member, it does not come to grips with the "blame the victim" problem that has plagued the University. Some faculty do not believe it is their problem that large numbers of students drop out—and then later blame the University, blame that becomes part of the institution's atmosphere and reputation. How can the faculty take responsibility for this situation when the reward structure works in the opposite direction? To a certain extent the principles miss the point. It does get at any hidden agenda about teaching and research, Professor Adams pointed out, and may invite debate in that regard.

Asked if the document goes far enough in differentiating the University's mission from that of the other systems of higher education, Professor Adams said it goes about as far as it can at present. The task force, he said, did NOT consider assigning proportions of time to be spent on each type of activity. How different the University is seen, opined one Committee member, depends on how the OTHER systems portray themselves. The taxonomy will be a useful tool in drawing out the differences.

Part of the problem of the University's reputation, asserted another Committee member, is that students may not understand their own responsibilities. The faculty, for the most part, do understand their responsibilities, but students sometimes believe they should be able to get by, and when they have a

bad experience, they blame it on the University. Nor has the University done a good job on educating them about their role in supporting the institution after they graduate.

This discussion, Professor Gray pointed out, gets at the broader problem that one hopes the faculty can address. As educators, faculty fail to teach what a research university is, so students leave not understanding the difference between the University, the University of St. Thomas, and St. Cloud State. It is the faculty's responsibility to inform students of the University's role; if they did so successfully, there would be far fewer questions. Right now, she added, some see research as an excuse not to do the real work of teaching. One of the best ways to inform students, recalled one Committee member, is through the UROP program--those undergraduates CLEARLY understand the research mission because of their contact with faculty doing research.

The Committee unanimously approved the principles and voted to place the document on the Faculty Senate docket.

It was agreed that the document is important enough to the faculty that it should be printed in full in the DAILY as part of the Senate docket. Professor Bognanno and other Committee members noted that those who support the principles should make their views known on the floor of the Senate.

The Committee adjourned at 3:00.

-- Gary Engstrand

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