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# The University Senate

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UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

## P&A Consultative Committee (PACC)

April 14, 2022

### 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 represent the views of, nor are they binding on, the senate, the administration or the Board of Regents.*

[**In these minutes:** Call to Order and Welcome; Civil Service Consultative Committee Report; PACC Chair and Chair-elect Reports; P&A Subcommittee Reports; Discussion of P&A Nominees for Senate Committee on Committees; Visit with President Joan Gabel]

**PRESENT:** Scott Creer, (chair), Adolfo Carrillo Cabello (chair-elect) Leigh Allen, Chelsie Bohlman, Marti Fasteland, Tracey Hammell, Monica Kocon, Maureen Long, Anna Milone, Nancy Sims

**GUESTS:** President Joan Gabel; Tony Fussy, chair-elect, Civil Service Senate/Civil Service Consultative Committee

**OTHERS ATTENDING:** Megan Sweet, assistant to the president, Office of the President

#### 1. Call to Order and Welcome

Chair Scott Creer called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone.

#### 2. Civil Service Consultative Committee Report

A written report, provided by Tony Fussy, chair-elect, Civil Service Senate/Civil Service Consultative Committee (CSCC), is included in [this document](#). Creer asked Fussy to share information about the Office of Human Resources (OHR) presentation at the most recent CSCC meeting regarding changes to the policy consultation process for OHR policies and governance groups. Fussy noted that OHR's intention is to invite governance members to be a part of focus groups which will discuss and review policies early in the comprehensive review process. Adolfo Carrillo Cabello, who attended the meeting, noted that Karen Schaffhausen, director, Strategic Planning, Policy, and Administration, (OHR) said she was willing to explore a more concrete method for those providing feedback to assure their feedback has been received and responded to.

Fussy and Carrillo Cabello both raised concerns regarding the reintroduction of Chrome River, now that travel is resuming as pandemic restrictions are being lifted.

### **3. PACC Chair and Chair-elect Reports**

A written report, provided by Creer and Carrillo Cabello is included in [this document](#). Creer noted that he had attended a dinner with the new deans of the University, the intention of which was engaging the deans in conversation about governance and the consultative process. He said he shared information about the P&A Senate's advocacy focus this year regarding elevating the work that P&As do at the University. He invited the deans to look at resources that are readily and easily available to faculty and consider how to create similar opportunities for P&A staff. Creer felt that the new deans showed interest in working toward an environment where the *work* is well supported, regardless of the employee class one belongs to.

Carrillo Cabello added that the Faculty Consultative Committee (FCC) leadership is developing a Design Thinking Forum event to discuss ways to get faculty excited and invigorated about returning to campus and creating community. Carrillo Cabello contacted the FCC leadership and asked if it was their intention to include P&A instructors at this event. FCC leadership confirmed that was their intention, and Carrillo Cabello invited those who would be interested in participating in the event to contact him.

### **4. P&A Subcommittee Reports**

Monthly written subcommittee reports are included in [this document](#). Creer invited subcommittee co-chairs to raise only items that needed action by the committee. Any such items will be brought up in New Business.

### **5. Discussion of P&A Nominees for Senate Committee on Committees**

Creer thanked PACC members for considering the nominations that were submitted for the open P&A seat on the Senate Committee on Committees (ConC). Barring any objections, Creer said he would proceed with confirming Noelle Notermann as the appointed member from PACC. There were no objections.

### **6. Visit with President Joan Gabel**

Creer welcomed President Joan Gabel to the meeting, and invited PACC members to introduce themselves and describe how their work supports the goals of the MPact 2025 Strategic Plan and the University's mission.

After introductions, committee members invited Gabel to join in a game of trivia, with questions designed to highlight the impact of P&A staff contributions to the University. Gabel thanked the committee members for taking time to intentionally connect their work to MPact 2025. She said this is valuable information and the kind of information that should be shared with members of the BOR, as they may not be fully aware of the breadth of the contribution of P&A staff at the University.

Creer then invited Gabel to share prepared remarks and she highlighted the following:

- Optimistic that the University is turning a corner as it copes with the changes generated by responding to the pandemic.
- Recognition and appreciation for the immense amount of creativity and teamwork that is happening at the University.
- The implementation of MPact is going well, and the University has met most of its metrics on time.

- The PEAK Initiative continues to work toward clarity around processes and functions and supporting the people who do them.
- The MSafe Implementation Team completed its work, and some of its recommendations are already under way:
  - Calls for Gabel to meet with the mayors of Saint Paul and Minneapolis
  - Review accessibility concerns around the RAVE Guardian app
  - Social worker hired to work with the University of Minnesota Police Department (UMPD)
  - Demilitarization resolution was reviewed by the MSafe and recommendations were included in its final report. Administrative response is in process.
  - Review and consideration of how to reframe and implement changes to mutual aid
- BOR Policy: *Namings and Renamings* approved at the February 2022 BOR meeting
- Because of the state's unexpected budget surplus, the University requested \$935 million to support projects and initiatives that are already underway and are supporting not only the University community, but communities statewide. While the University did not receive what it requested, Gabel feels it is important to present to the legislature those projects that it values and will continue to work on.
- Student Mental Health/PRISM - four work groups have been developed to address:
  - Availability of support (services and delivery)
  - Communication around the availability of those resources
  - Faculty and staff allyship
  - Underlying cause research grants

Marti Fasteland and Monica Kocon facilitated a question and answer session with [questions](#) that were submitted to Gabel in advance of the meeting. Questions were grouped into four categories: budget and finance, organizational culture, Work. With Flexibility, Covid.

Regarding balancing staff compensation with acceptable tuition levels, Gabel noted:

- Prior to the recent increase in inflation, the proposed 3.85% raise seemed substantive and was partly in response to the 2020 salaries staying flat or being reduced in response to the pandemic.
- The economy is moving much faster than the University can react given its two-year budget cycle.
- The historically high raise amount of 3.85% should allow the University to begin correcting for those jobs that are severely below market rate.

Regarding the length of time needed by Office of Human Resources, University Budget, and University Finance to address getting ahead with staff compensation versus always playing catch up, Gabel said:

- It's very difficult to predict, as there are many factors that the University does not have control over. She described a possible three-year operational sequence:
  - The current year's proposed 3.85% raise would help the University catch up with peer institutions and market rate.
  - The first year of PEAK will be completed in fall 2022 which will give a sense of the scope of recovered resources available within the University and how much of those can be translated to salary increases. This would inform how much of the gap can be closed in year two.

- With the internal resources and the allotment from the state, it can be determined if the gap with peer institutions/market rate can be closed in three years or if it will take longer.

Regarding how compensation levels impact the University's ability to retain, hire, and maintain a high quality of services, Gabel said Ken Horstman, vice president, OHR, would have more expertise and be better suited to answer that question. She added that the quality of service has remained very high at the University because of staff professionalism and commitment to the University and its mission. The fact that the University needs to increase its competitiveness is recognized, she said.

Regarding the gap in how employees, P&A in particular, are viewed in comparison to faculty, as evidenced by a recent communication that appeared to suggest that it was more important to protect faculty in classrooms than the general population of the University community, Gabel responded:

- The intention of that message was to provide more robust protection against Covid than the Minnesota Department of Public Health was requiring, *not* to single out faculty as more deserving of protection against Covid than other University community members. Gabel apologized for the oversight and said that continued attention would be paid to being intentional and purposeful in communications.

Regarding how the President advises deans and department heads around support for staff during this time of increased responsibilities:

- Gabel advises on this topic at Deans Council, Senior Leadership Team, and System Council meetings.
- One of the intentions of the PEAK Initiative is to guard against job category descriptions that allow for more and more types of responsibilities to be added. The work of PEAK is to look at people doing bits of multiple jobs, and streamline and focus what is expected of them.
- With the intended clarity of jobs and additional financial resources that PEAK is expected to provide, staffing levels and work distribution should improve.
- The administration is being more intentional about providing professional development and advancement opportunities for staff.

Gabel said that feedback she has received from members of the BOR is that they are happy to engage with PACC, and that they appreciate the efficacy of PACC's advocacy on behalf of its constituents.

Creer thanked Gabel for joining the meeting today and, in the interest of time, adjourned the meeting.

Geanette Poole  
University Senate Office