

Minutes*

**Faculty Consultative Committee
Thursday, December 2, 2004
12:00 – 2:00
4-300D Carlson School**

- Present: Marvin Marshak (chair), Gary Balas, Susan Brorson, Jean Bauer, Charles Campbell, Carol Chomsky, Tom Clayton, Gary Davis, Dan Feeney, Mary Jo Kane, Morris Kleiner, Scott Lanyon, Judith Martin, Fred Morrison, Jeff Ratliff-Crain, Martin Sampson, John Sullivan
- Absent: Emily Hoover, Kathleen Krichbaum
- Guests: Professors Ronald Phillips, Wilbert Ahern, Sara Evans, Alfred Michael, Nelson Rhodus (Task Force on the Instrumentalization of the University); President Robert Bruininks; Professors Wilbert Ahern, Vernon Cardwell, Will Durfee, Arthur Erdman, Gordon Hirsch, and Karen Zentner Bacig (Academy of Distinguished Teachers Executive Committee)
- Other: Kathryn Stuckert (Office of the Chief of Staff)

[In these minutes: (1) discussion with members of the Task Force on the Instrumentalization of the University; (2) discussion with President Bruininks; (3) discussion with members of the Executive Committee of the Academy of Distinguished Teachers]

1. Discussion with the Task Force on the Instrumentalization of the University

Professor Marshak convened the meeting at 12:05 and welcomed Professors Phillips, Ahern, Evans, Michael, and Rhodus, members of the Task Force on the Instrumentalization of the University (which produced the subsequently-named "Lighthouse Report," which can be found at <http://www1.umn.edu/usenate/fcc/lighthousereport.html>. He asked Regents' Professor Phillips, chair of the task force, to provide a summary and comments on the report.

Professor Phillips thanked the Committee for working with the Provost to appoint the task force; those who served on it enjoyed it a great deal and got a great deal from the service. In the phrase of the report, "the people of Minnesota and the world are enriched beyond measure by the University of Minnesota. Sure there are imperfections and bumps in the road, but the contributions of the University to the quality of life for residents of Minnesota and that improve the lives of the global community are tremendous." He then briefly reviewed the contents of the chapters of the report:

The Lighthouse Rests on a Rock Solid Foundation by providing education in many forms: traditional and non-traditional classrooms; publication of research; the production of educated citizens who can be creative problem solvers for the future; and the full spectrum of

* These minutes reflect discussion and debate at a meeting of a committee of the University of Minnesota Senate or Twin Cities Campus Assembly; none of the comments, conclusions, or actions reported in these minutes represents the views of, nor are they binding on, the Senate or Assembly, the Administration, or the Board of Regents.

professionals and Ph.D. research scholars. A central task at the University of Minnesota is to enhance the ability of our students to become creative problem solvers.

Lighthouse Infrastructure is Essential. From its beginning as a land-grant institution, the University has been structured to generate public goods; i.e., goods available to all that cannot be hoarded by any one group--like the light of the lighthouse. The University provides a continuum of research and education from the basic to the applied in an internationally competitive manner. But to do this the quality of its classrooms and laboratories require consistent, thoughtful attention.

Lighthouse Beam is Available to All. The University enhances the quality of life for all Minnesotans through artistic and literary expression, generating jobs and new businesses, offering practical applications of new knowledge for families, gardeners, farmers, health care providers, businesses, and the general public wishing to better understand everything from weather patterns to conflicts in the far corners of the earth. It welcomes diversity of ideas, perspective, and culture into the "marketplace of ideas" and teaches students to live more effectively in a world increasingly dependent on the human capacity to discover common ground across enormous differences. There is a growing perception, however, that the changing nature of funding for both education and research could transform that beam from a public into a private good, available primarily to those able and willing to pay for it.

The Light Shines Across the Waters linking Minnesotans to peoples, cultures and scientific communities across the globe. The community of scholars is itself global and education within it gives students access to experiential education that equips them with the life-long capacities for creative problem solving. New ideas and professional expertise generated here find application not only throughout the State but also the world. Fundamental to this, however, is a culture that supports basic research and seeks knowledge for its own sake, challenging what we already think we know in order to open up new possibilities whose practical applications may remain invisible for a long time.

The Security of those Illuminated. The light that makes it possible to foresee shoals and to change course rapidly is not just an inherent quality of the University but rather something it imparts to its students. They enter a world in which change continues to accelerate, encountering jobs for which no current training exists and problems which have not been anticipated. A measure of the University's success is the degree to which our students become independently thinking leaders in the community with the tools to continue to learn and grow by thinking in new ways.

Knowing the Light will be Ever-Present. The University's role in basic and applied research and the discovery and dissemination of new knowledge lights the path for the future, providing a "heads up" to our graduates. The future of our sons and daughters depends on a continually evolving and improving world-class university.

Professor Phillips then cited a number of the works the Task Force had relied on.

Much at the University the public does not know about, Professor Phillips said, so how, he asked, can they appreciate it? He reviewed the recommendations of the Task Force:

- Emphasize the goals of the University in terms of “public goods” which are products of its partnership with the people of the State.
- Reaffirm that students need to be educated as analytical, creative problem solvers for a changing work and life experience. Human interaction is central to the educational process.
- Recognize that education includes research, teaching and outreach.
- Commit to informing the citizens of Minnesota about the contributions of their University of Minnesota.
- Understand that the University is an ever-evolving institution where priorities may change but affirm that the basic mission remains constant.
- Value and protect intellectual freedom and the search for knowledge.
- Support basic research as a pivotal component at the U of M.
- Foster the complementarity of the University of Minnesota campuses to provide the fullest range of opportunities to students.
- Differentiate clearly the role of the University relative to other Minnesota institutions of higher learning while recognizing that a familial relationship exists among all these campuses.
- Recognize even more vigorously that diversity provides strength to all programs and means the inclusion of different cultures, openness to all voices, and a refusal to squelch dissent. An international perspective should be an integral part of all educational programs; a peaceful world depends on education.
- Use income streams available to the University to foster a broad array of programs, not only those from which the funds are generated.
- Develop priorities for future capital improvements to ensure consistency with the full mission of the University. Those priorities must include consideration of long-term maintenance costs.
- Broaden opportunities for community engagement for students to gain leadership skills and to achieve a greater involvement with people in the State.
- Develop a covenant with the State of Minnesota about the level of state funding that will be provided to the University of Minnesota as well as about the level that reasonably should be furnished through tuition.

Professor Marshak asked him to talk about what specifically this Committee, the Senate, and the administration might do to implement the recommendations of the report. One, he said it would be useful to document, and to have a document on, public goods that come out of the University. There is a lot of attention paid to proprietary goods and it is useful to remind people that other goods come from the

University as well. Second, one student who spoke with the Task Force said she wished that all students had the opportunity to think about the University the way she had done so in talking with the Task Force; the University should state clearly that it is trying to train students as problem-solvers, not for their next job. Three, the University should emphasize that research is conducted for educational purposes, as is service/outreach. Four, there needs to be more public communications; the University could do a lot more to publicize what it is doing. Professor Phillips related that he was on a selection committee for McKnight Distinguished Professors and was amazed by the stellar individuals who were nominated and the many things they were doing about which he had no idea. Five, thought should be given to creating a community engagement officer for students. Six, there should be a course on the gamut of values that the University provides to the state and nation. Seven, there should be developed a covenant with the state (the reasonable expectations from the state and the proportion of state support for its activities is worth scholarly thought). They are proud of the report, Professor Phillips concluded, and believe that a lot of people should read it, including perhaps the Governor.

Professor Phillips asked other Task Force members to comment. Professor Michael said he had found it very nourishing to be on the Task Force. It was not at all clear at first where the group was going, but it soon became clear that it would be delving into what the University is all about. There were several things that excited him about the work of the Task Force:

- the metaphor of light
- the primacy of research and education, articulated by all, with some question about the role of industry and technology, questions that were resolved with the discussion of public goods
- the importance of all the various parts of the University coming together
- the relationship of the University to the state and the citizens of Minnesota.

How well does the University do the job on the last point? Viewed through the University of Minnesota Foundation and the Minnesota Medical Foundation—which are primarily fund-raising activities—Professor Michael said he would conclude the University does not do the job well with respect to what things it does. This is a wonderful state, and the legislature generally reflects the will of the citizens, and it is to be hoped the report leads to more links with the state. If the University is to receive more resources, it is important that it be more widely appreciated. There is a need for more direction and intensity in this effort over the long haul, which will require wise leadership.

Professor Rhodus agreed with Professor Phillips that he had been enlightened by service on the Task Force. Communication is important, he said. In the spirit of Minnesota, the University is a little humble and does not promote what it does. The eye does not see what the brain does not recognize, so there must be ways identified to promote knowledge about the University so people will be more supportive. He said he would like to see the University enjoy the same level of support that other Big Ten universities appear to have in their states. The report has a little of the "rah-rah" to it but also has great content and one hopes it can be used.

Professor Evans recalled that the Task Force felt that it had been given a cumbersome name, and had told this Committee that it would not be using the word "instrumentalization" in its report, but she said she wanted to remind the Committee of what precipitated the appointment of the Task Force: the perceived danger, when funding declines, that the University would fall into the trap of being measured by the corporate profits generated from its discoveries. The Task Force thought a lot about the problem of the instrumental uses of the University. The view of the University only as the economic engine of the

state misses the heart and soul of the institution and the predominance of that view creates the risk that the University will evolve into something that none at the table would recognize. As they worked, the Task Force members wanted to speak both "to ourselves and to those outside" the University. Some of the report can be used with external audiences, she said, because people must feel that they own the University. The University must affirm the centrality of education, especially with undergraduates, and of research, especially research that may not bring in a lot of external funding, because these both have an important impact on the quality of life in Minnesota. She said it had been a privilege to serve on the Task Force and discuss fundamental issues. Times are hard and the decisions about resources could change what the University is; if there is not a strong sense of "who we are," the institution could make the wrong decisions.

Professor Kleiner said there is a question, with declining funding from the state, if Minnesota wants a mediocre university while the faculty want a top-20 university. How would Task Force members recommend dealing with the problem of the public perhaps wanting one type of university while the faculty want something different? Professor Phillips said the Task Force talked about that issue but did not have an answer. They did talk about the way to smooth out the rollercoaster funding, which requires principles and a covenant. Professor Kleiner said he sees a steady-state/decline in support for the University, which signals that the state accepts the idea of having a university that was not as good as it was in the 1950s and 1960s relative to other universities. How is it to deal with that? Professor Phillips said he was not sure that's what the state wants, because he said the state may not appreciate what is going on at the University. The citizens do not know what is going on, Professor Michael affirmed; they learn in fund-raising how surprised people are at what they learn about the University. There is an information gap between people and what goes on at the University. The challenge is to raise the priority of the University so the state wants what the University wants, Professor Rhodus said. The strategy must be to elevate the desire of the people of the state for a strong university.

Much of their discussion was about talking to people about why their lives are enhanced by a top university and why all are affected by it, Professor Evans said. Clearly, being a top-20 university enhances the careers of all its faculty, but faculty must not lose sight of their connection to the state and the ways that the University's excellence benefits the broader common good. There was a lot of talk about communicating more effectively with the people of Minnesota and pushing against the political tide that wants to downsize government and reduce public commitment to higher education.

Professor Ahern agreed that it had been a pleasure to serve on the Task Force and he, along with Professor Michael, commended Professor Phillips for his leadership. In terms of the perceptions of the University, he said he agreed with Professor Evans and had a couple of additional comments. The Task Force was startled by information from former Vice President Gardebring on public perceptions of the University: the highest-profile elements are the football and basketball teams and there is much less understanding of the impact of other parts of the University. How can the University put more effective energy into an effort to help the public understand the value of a university? The faculty want a top-20 university; but there needs to be discussion of what that means. A top-20 university serves academic needs well, and also serves well some segments of the state but perhaps not others. He said the focus must be on the public good, which cannot be stressed too much. In tough times, the University pays a heavy price for its failure to convince others of the value of public goods. He said he was impressed by the points made by Federal Reserve Bank Senior Vice President Art Rolnick, who maintains that the quality of life in Minnesota reflects investments made a generation ago; the public can understand this but it is not self-evident.

The report points out the public valuing of higher education, Professor Lanyon said, but the problem is national, not just in Minnesota. Should the effort be in Minnesota or should there be a unified national effort to change those public perceptions of higher education? The pressure to downsize is national; he said he was concerned if the activities only highlighted what the University of Minnesota does. Professor Phillips agreed. He said it may sound like a platitude, but it is time to stand out, and he has thought about trying to have parts of the report published in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. The University has a lot to offer and must be sure its constituents understand that.

Professor Campbell said the Task Force had produced a magnificent report. He said he also agreed with Professor Lanyon; Congress will soon be taking up reauthorization of the Higher Education Act and there has been a lot of criticism of higher education—which is usually the justification for cuts. He also agreed the report should be widely disseminated. But, he pointed out, the University works most effectively close to where it is; it would be a crime if the University let students leave without understanding what it is in this report. He added that he was not sure University employees, especially in University Relations, understand what the University is and how to publicize it. He said that this Committee needs to identify ways to do concrete things to distribute the report. Professor Martin noted that she has already distributed it colleagues in the CIC.

Professor Kane said that this Committee has talked a lot about how to frame the message for the 21st Century. She suggested that the members of the Task Force meet with the new Vice President for Institutional Relations to help figure out a strategy to disseminate the information in the report. It was agreed that Professors Marshak and Phillips would meet with the new vice president when she was on campus.

Professor Marshak thanked the members of the Task Force for joining the meeting. Committee members gave the Task Force members a round of applause for their report.

2. Discussion with President Bruininks

Professor Marshak next welcomed President Bruininks to the meeting. The Committee and the President discussed a number of matters.

- Information about the search for the Vice President for Institutional Relations
- The budget forecast, the state budget, the University's budget, and potential revenue sources
- The McKnight Leadership Chairs and the need to build a range of options at the all-University level to attract, retain, and recognize talented people
- A personnel matter

Professor Marshak thanked the President for joining the meeting.

3. Discussion with the Academy of Distinguished Teachers Executive Committee

Professor Marshak now welcomed some of the members of the Executive Committee of the Academy of Distinguished Teachers (ADT).

Professor Durfee, Chair of the Steering Committee of the Twin Cities branch of the Academy, said he would respond to questions raised by Professor Marshak in an email earlier in the week. He reviewed the mission of the Academy ("to recognize and celebrate teaching excellence, to foster the continued improvement of teaching and learning at the University of Minnesota, and to strengthen the resources necessary to do so.") The ADT was started in 1999, at the instigation of former President Yudof, to recognize outstanding teaching, and its members are those who have won the Morse-Alumni or Graduate-Professional awards for outstanding contributions to education. There are about 180 members across the four campuses.

In terms of what they are doing, Professor Durfee reported, the ADT holds an annual fall retreat to talk about teaching that about 45-50 people attend. They have a biannual conference; they have written two white papers; they have a website with resources on teaching and learning; they have a small grants program; they look at such things as the role of teaching in promotion in the college, the role students want faculty to play in their lives, and better ways to coordinate undergraduate participation in research; they survey ADT members about their service activities; and they examine the impact of University research activities on undergraduate teaching and learning. [The two white papers are *Fostering Communities of Teaching* - <http://www.adt.umn.edu/rfaculty.html> and *The Role of Teaching in Hiring, Promotion, and Tenure* - http://www.adt.umn.edu/pdf/adt_booklet2.pdf.]

In terms of what should be happening and how could the ADT, FCC, and the administration work together, Professor Durfee identified several things. They should continue to work to ensure that teaching and learning are central to the University. They should recognize that the University is special in that it offers recognition of teaching (it is not unique in this respect, but not a lot of universities have it). They should recognize that ADT and the Center for Teaching and Learning Services are the only two organizations on campus whose sole focus is on learning. The ADT should be the voice of teaching and learning in a number of areas because it is a large body of very distinguished faculty; the University needs to figure out how to take advantage of their voice. If the goal of the strategic planning process is for the University to be one of the top three public institutions in the country, how can ADT help? If a goal is to help the state recognize the importance of the University, what role could ADT play in highlighting the teaching and research? Since the ADT is relatively new, there are questions about where it fits in the scheme of things.

Professor Cardwell suggested the Committee should promote connections between ADT and administrative functions related to teaching; one way to do so would be to have an ADT member serve ex officio on the Senate Committee on Educational Policy (SCEP), the chief educational policy-making body at the University. He currently serves on SCEP, as do other ADT members, but that representation is not guaranteed; if it were, that would ensure that issues of concern to ADT get to SCEP, this Committee, and the Senate.

Professor Erdman said the University often does not take advantage of groups that have been honored (in either teaching or research). The recognition should involve more than just a plaque on the wall.

FCC has talked a lot about getting the message out to people about what the University has to offer and why it is a terrific public investment, Professor Kane related. It so often focuses on research that people can forget the University has many great teachers. She suggested that the ADT meet with the new Vice President for Institutional Relations to let her know about the ADT. She asked if the ADT has received any feedback about when faculty go up for tenure, whether the dean or their colleagues respect what ADT members have done. Professor Martin noted that one of the ADT white papers is on that precise topic: a significant number of faculty are rewarded for teaching but then never promoted. The white paper calls for teaching excellence to be part of the discussion.

Professor Cardwell recalled that Professor Sampson has talked about legislative relations. ADT members have a large number of students who are graduates of their programs—those graduates need to be the source of messages about good things at the University. He said he sent a letter to 20 of his former students and asked them about good news emanating from the University that is important to the state, nation, and world and what they as individuals derived from their experience. He said he did not know what he would get, but he urged letting others reflect on what they took away from their programs. Professor Marshak asked Professor Cardwell to share the results with the Committee.

Professor Chomsky reported that she participates in the training session for new department heads/chairs and recently asked what they and their departments are doing to support teaching and what their problems/concerns they have in this area. It was a great discussion, highlighting great ideas for supporting teaching and identifying issues that they might more effectively resolve by sharing ideas. But it was the first and probably the last time the heads/chairs would come together to talk about these issues. Professor Durfee previously asked for suggestions about what additional steps ADT could take to implement its white paper on creating a supportive community for teachers and learners; one idea would be serve as a forum for such discussions with department heads and chairs. The Center for Teaching and Learning Services can't provide as effective a forum for such discussions; it's important to have the faculty voice there to lead and facilitate.

Professor Sampson said that former Vice President Gardebring last June indicated it would be helpful to have statements from faculty about teaching, and she sent a note of appreciation when the ADT asked its members to provide a page or two of teaching anecdotes that might be useful for External Relations. A month or so later a compilation of ADT member statements was delivered to her office, but nothing appears to have ensued because VP Gardebring departed. The ADT could play a role in the effort to help promote University-legislative relations and is happy to do so. Now that Vice President Gardebring has left there is a need to talk to the new vice president. Professor Martin suggested that the statements be provided to incoming Vice President Thrane.

Professor Cardwell said he attended the last of Provost Sullivan's town meetings about strategic planning; he said the goal of being in the top three public institutions is clear, laudable, and ambitious. The problem is that it is important to bring teaching and learning along with research. It is clear that research generates the funding that provides flexibility in programs; it is also clear that those who are dedicated to teaching and learning are supporting researchers (who thus need not spend as much time in undergraduate education)—but they do not receive the same financial rewards for teaching as they do for research. His bias is to look at the Regents' Professors as a way the University measures its esteem for outstanding scholars and to urge that it have a similar way to recognize outstanding contributions to teaching and learning. Being among the top three requires outstanding undergraduate and graduate programs. How the University achieves that quality will be an important measure of success.

One concrete example of this question is what is expected of undergraduate students and the work they should be putting into their classes, Professor Erdman commented; he alluded to the recent article reporting that students do not put in as much work as faculty think they should. This has been a topic at the ADT retreats, and a number of faculty believe this is a disturbing trend that needs to be addressed. He suggested that FCC discuss it in the context of the role of ADT.

Professor Hirsch pointed out that there are a lot of academic advisors on the campuses who receive no recognition comparable to the ADT, and it is time to recognize them as well. The students recognize them but the University does not. Professor Marshak asked why the Tate Award winners are not in the ADT. A few are, he said, but only because they have won one of the other two awards; the financial recognition for the Tate Award is smaller than for the other two.

Professor Cardwell said it is important there be congruence between University activities. He has seen the highlighted priorities for research and how they will be funded but he has not heard discussion about the implications for undergraduate education (it is clear there is a ripple effect on graduate education).

Professor Marshak thanked the members of the ADT for joining the meeting and for their suggestions. The Committee gave the ADT members a round of applause.

Professor Marshak adjourned the meeting at 2:00.

-- Gary Engstrand

University of Minnesota