

**Senate Committee on Educational Policy (SCEP)**  
**March 13, 2019**  
**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 Updates; Action on the 2022-23 Morris Academic Calendar; Disabilities Issues Resolution; Action on Administrative Policies: *Holds on Records and Registration* and *Withholding Diplomas and Official Transcripts from Students*; Discussion of Priority Registration; Graduate Education Goals]

**PRESENT:** Jennifer Goodnough (chair), Toni Abts, Nicola Alexander, Michael Anderson, Julia Brokaw, Elaine Darst, Dan Delaney, Stacy Doepner-Hove, Gayle Golden, Jude Goossens, Scott Lanyon, Ken Leopold, Keith Mayes, Robert Poch, Brian Sick

**REGRETS:** Bob McMaster, Emily Shilts, Sophia Vrba, Nevin Young

**ABSENT:** Yan Liang

**GUESTS:** Professor Ben Munson, chair, Disabilities Issues Committee; Ryan Machtmes, member, Organization for Graduate and Professional Students with Disabilities

**OTHERS:** Jessica Kuecker Grotjohn, assistant to the vice provost and dean, Office of Undergraduate Education; Stacey Tidball, director, Compliance and Continuity, Academic Support Resources; Char Voigt, director, Faculty Initiatives, The Graduate School

**1. Call to Order and Updates**

Professor Jennifer Goodnough, chair, called the meeting to order. She first mentioned that there had been a request to make an exception to the rule, outlined in the Faculty Senate Bylaws, that academic professionals must be eligible for the Faculty Senate to serve on SCEP. Several academic professional members, including Stacy Doepner-Hove and Toni Abts, said that they are not eligible for the Faculty Senate. Doepner-Hove added, as a former chair of the Committee on Committees, that she was unaware of the rule. Amber Bathke, senate associate, surmised that the Committee on Committees has apparently not been enforcing the rule for at least for the last six years, as Doepner-Hove was appointed in 2013. She said that she would investigate further.

Goodnough then reported that she had received a request to include child care during school closings for inclement weather as a legitimate absence for student parents in the Administrative Policy: *Makeup Work for Legitimate Absences*. Goodnough noted that there is already a FAQ encouraging instructors to be flexible under such circumstances. Michael Anderson reminded members that a small subcommittee worked on that policy during the last academic year. He said that this question had come up then, as well, and that the subcommittee had decided it fits better in a FAQ. Stacey Tidball, director, Compliance and Continuity, Academic Support Resources,

added that there is a reluctance to try to list every possible legitimate absence in the policy. Members agreed. Goodnough said that she would respond to the request, noting that if it becomes a significant issue, the committee could revisit it at a later time.

## **2. Action on the 2022-23 Morris Academic Calendar**

Next, Goodnough directed members' attention to the proposed 2022-23 Morris academic calendar:

### **2022-2023 UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA, MORRIS CALENDAR**

#### Fall Semester 2022 (73 class days)

Monday, August 15: Faculty 9-month appointments begin

August 20-23: New Student Orientation

Wednesday, August 24: Classes begin

Monday, September 5: Labor Day holiday

Friday, October 14: First half semester classes end

Monday and Tuesday, October 17-18: Fall Break (no classes)

Wednesday, October 20: Second half semester classes begin

Thursday and Friday, November 24-25: Thanksgiving Holiday and floating holiday

Friday, December 9: Last day of instruction

December 10-12: Study days

December 13-16: Final examinations

#### Spring Semester 2023 (74 class days)

Monday, January 16: MLK Holiday

Tuesday, January 17: Classes begin

Friday, March 10: First half semester classes end

March 13-17: Spring Break

Friday, March 17: Floating Holiday

Monday, March 20: Second half semester classes begin

Friday, May 5: Last day of instruction

May 6-8: Study days

May 9-12: Final examinations

Saturday, May 13: Commencement

Sunday, May 14: Faculty 9-month appointments end

#### May Session 2023 (14 class days)

Monday, May 15: May session begins

Monday, May 29: Memorial Day holiday

Friday, June 2: May session ends

#### Summer Session 2023

May 22-June 23: Summer Session I (24 class days)

Monday, May 29: Memorial Day holiday

June 26-July 28: Summer Session II (24 class days)

Tuesday, July 4, 2023: Independence Day holiday

2022-2023 Holidays (Total: 11)

Monday, July 4, 2022: Independence Day holiday

Monday, September 5: Labor Day holiday

Thursday, November 24: Thanksgiving holiday

Friday, November 25: Floating holiday

Friday, December 23: Floating holiday

Monday, December 26: Christmas holiday

Friday, December 30: Floating holiday

Monday, January 2, 2023: New Years holiday

Monday, January 16: MLK holiday

Friday, March 17: Floating holiday

Monday, May 29: Memorial Day holiday

Goodnough asked if there were any questions or concerns. Dan Delaney pointed out that the faculty contracts end two non-business days after the end of finals in the spring semester, noting that the deadline for submitting grades is three business days after the end of finals. He asked if this was a problem. Goodnough responded that it happens that way sometimes and it is not a problem, but said that she would pass on that feedback. Members then approved the proposed calendar by a voice vote.

### **3. Disabilities Issues Resolution**

Next, Goodnough welcomed Professor Ben Munson, chair, Disabilities Issues Committee, and Ryan Machtmes from the Organization for Graduate and Professional Students with Disabilities (OGPSD). Munson explained that he was present to seek feedback on and support for the Disabilities Issues Committee's [Resolution on Education Around Best Practices for Disability Accommodations and Supporting Students with Disabilities](#). Munson noted that the need for training around disabilities bears several similarities to the situation that prompted the mandatory training on preventing and responding to sexual misconduct: first, there are laws and policies governing access to higher education for students with disabilities, and the failure to comply with these can result in litigation, and there is also a need for culture change around disability accommodations for students. Munson added that the number of students with disabilities, especially related to mental health, has been increasing due to services in the K-12 system. Higher education is now accessible to students that in the past might not have had the opportunity to go to college, said Munson, and colleges and universities need to adjust to serve these students more effectively. He expressed the opinion that accommodations are a stop gap and universal design is preferable.

Machtmes informed members that OGPSD has raised money to create three videos to serve as this training, adding that if the administration wanted to do a more extensive training, OGPSD would be supportive. Munson noted that he had met with Rebecca Ropers-Huilman, vice provost, Faculty and Academic Affairs, and that further resources for a more extensive training might be available.

Goodnough noted that one of the recommendations of the [Joint Task Force on Student Mental Health](#) (JTFSMH) was to require all instructors to take the Disability Resource Center's training on the Americans with Disabilities Act and best practices for accommodations, and that this resolution fit nicely with that recommendation. She noted, however, that it is not easy to identify everyone who teaches classes. Gayle Golden said that there is definitely a need for such training, and that she was working with a committee that is putting together a Brown Bag on the topic. She said that the most effective way to deliver such training is to have representatives in the departments and units act as advocates. She suggested doing something of the sort in addition to an online training. Ken Leopold seconded this suggestion. Munson agreed and said that the training the resolution calls for is meant to be a starting point, not to solve the problem on its own.

Keith Mayes asked which types of disabilities are on the rise on college campuses. Munson said that sensory and motor impairments, such as those resulting from mild traumatic brain injuries, learning disabilities, autism, and mental health concerns accounted for most of the increase.

Golden remarked that universal design is great, but most faculty are still struggling with accommodation requests. She said that if the University could educate faculty in how to use accommodation letters as a tool and how to frame discussions of accommodations in a positive and non-judgemental way, that would make a big difference.

Abts asked if there was any thought of requiring the training for all staff, not just instructors. Munson said that this had come up in several conversations.

Leopold suggested referring to the training as “instructional workshops” or “professional development” would be more palatable to faculty members. Goodnough stressed that making sure the training was available and accessible to system campuses would be critical. Members called for a vote and endorsed the resolution unanimously.

#### **4. Action on Administrative Policies: *Holds on Records and Registration and Withholding Diplomas and Official Transcripts from Students***

In the interest of time, Goodnough proposed holding an online vote on Administrative Policies: [Holds on Records and Registration](#) and [Withholding Diplomas and Official Transcripts from Students](#). Members agreed.

#### **5. Discussion of Priority Registration**

Goodnough then initiated a discussion of priority registration for students with disabilities. She emphasized that it was simply a conversation at this time, based on another recommendation of the JTFSMH, which was to allow students with documented disabilities to request priority registration. Goodnough reported that she had talked with Donna Johnson, director of the Disability Resource Center (DRC) on the Twin Cities campus, who said that students with documented disabilities can already request it as an accommodation. Other campuses' policies vary, some granting priority registration automatically or by request to students with disabilities and other statuses, such as veterans, nursing students, honors students, and student athletes.

Golden commented that students with disabilities might not know they can request priority registration, and suggested that it could be granted to them automatically, as is done for honors students and student athletes on the Twin Cities campus. Members pointed out that students work with DRC staff to determine appropriate accommodations, and priority registration is one of the options discussed. Other members pointed out that students with disabilities constitutes a large group on the Twin Cities campus, and that not all students with disabilities have the same needs. It would also pose logistical challenges, including the need to “flag” students with disabilities in PeopleSoft, which may be undesirable from a privacy standpoint. Golden replied that students could opt in, and proposed further conversation around this topic. She added that further data would be helpful. Goodnough said that representation from the DRC should be part of the conversation as well, and said that she would confer further with Johnson and bring the topic back to a subsequent meeting.

## **6. Graduate Educational Goals**

Finally, Goodnough welcomed Scott Lanyon, vice provost and dean, The Graduate School. Using a [PowerPoint](#), Lanyon updated the committee on the progress of establishing educational goals (learning outcomes) for graduate students.

Anderson asked whether there is a parallel process for professional schools. Lanyon said that other than accreditation requirements, he did not think so. Scott/Char - Other than accreditation, don't think so. He elaborated, adding that accreditation was one of the reasons that the professional schools are no longer under the umbrella of The Graduate School.

In reference to the slide detailing the Graduate School Advisory Council's recommendation that all graduate programs post a formal statement outlining what the program expects of graduate students, and having each faculty member post their own personal formal statement outlining what they as advisors expect of their advisees., Nicola Anderson asked for an example of a program statement. Lanyon replied that he did not have an example ready. He said that programs' expectations for students are generally included in program handbooks, but that it is not always apparent. He did, however, provide an example of a [faculty statement](#) that he had written, as well as [prompts](#) for faculty to aid them in writing their own statement. He added that, according to the Student Conflict Resolution Center, about 75% of the conflicts between graduate advisors and advisees stem from poor communication of expectations. The hope is that providing these statements would help alleviate that problem. Abts commented that she is privy to many such conflicts, and agreed that these statements would help.

Julia Brokaw said that she is a member of the Graduate Student Advisory Council, and stressed blanket statements are not ideal, as every student is different and advisors should have different expectations for each student. She added that some sort of oversight would be helpful to ensure that advisors have reasonable expectations.

Goodnough asked if there was any thought about asking programs to identify essential skills and technical competencies so that programs can be up front about what can or cannot be accommodated with regard to disabilities. Lanyon said that most programs have not done this, but that including a few different ways to assess skills was helpful.

Lanyon acknowledged that writing these statements takes time and involves a lot of self reflection, but said he thinks it will save time in the end. Goodnough pointed out that it would also help attract the best graduate students, and suggested publicizing that as an incentive for faculty.

Hearing no further discussion, Goodnough thanked Lanyon and adjourned the meeting.

Amber Bathke  
University Senate Office