The fifth meeting of the University Senate for 2023-24 was convened on March 28, 2024, online via Zoom. At the time of this meeting, there were 232 voting members of the University Senate. 154 were present.

1. University Senate Call to Order
Interim President Jeffrey Ettinger

Interim President Jeffrey Ettinger called the meeting to order at 2:30 p.m.

2. Administrative Responses to University Senate Actions (Information for the University Senate)

   - *Workforce Reinvestment: Building a Better U for Employees* Resolution
     o *Response*

3. Tribute to Deceased Members of the University Community

   *Faculty/Staff*
   Michael Horrigan
   Museum Guard
   Tweed Museum of Art
   University of Minnesota Duluth
   1983-2024

   James Johnson
   Researcher
   Office of the Vice President for Research
   University of Minnesota Twin Cities
   1953-2024

   Thomas Johnson
   Assistant Professor
4. Approval of Minutes (Action by the University Senate)
Professor Ned Patterson, clerk, University Senate

Motion: To approve the minutes from the University Senate Meeting on February 22, 2024.

Approved

5. President’s Report
Interim President Jeffrey Ettinger

Ettinger provided his report, highlighting the following points:

- Dr. Rebecca Cunningham will join the University as its 18th president. She comes from Michigan State. Ettinger complimented the Office of the Board of Regents on the search process.
- The “Dear Minnesota” campaign was launched in the fall, with the aim of improving the University’s favorability among Minnesotans. Early market research indicates significant, double-digit improvements, including favorable feelings about the University up by 11% and belief that University of Minnesota research is important climbing by 12%. All of these metrics are statistically significant and projectable across the state of Minnesota with a 95% confidence rate.
- Officials continue to make the case for full funding of the University’s legislative requests, including $500 million for building maintenance funds; $45 million in supplemental budget funds for core mission support; and $80 million in academic health funding. Late last week, Governor Walz and legislative majority leaders released a supplemental budget proposal that identified no new resources for the University’s
legislative requests. Ettinger is meeting with Governor Walz and legislative leaders on this and other issues within the next week.

- The Senate Health and Human Services Committee heard the University's academic health legislative request at its March 21st meeting. Jakub Tolar, vice president for Clinical Affairs and dean of the Medical School, testified that the University and the six Health Sciences schools stand ready to help the state shape the ecosystem of health care.
- Officials have also testified in reaction to bills in both the House and the Senate regarding the Public Employment Labor Relations Act (PELRA). These bills would modify University of Minnesota employee bargaining units, making it easier for some groups to unionize. Ettinger affirmed that the University does not wish to prevent employee groups from organizing, and agrees that a review of PELRA is due. However, the administration wants time to analyze operational impacts and consult with employees who will be affected by these changes.
- In the interest of campus safety on the Twin Cities Campus, the University of Minnesota Police Department (UMPD) will now respond to all 911 calls for the Minneapolis Police Department (MPD) in a defined area between University Avenue and 4th Street SE and from 35W to Oak Street SE. The Department of Public Safety is also exploring options for a safety center in Dinkytown.
- The University is working through the next steps regarding the return of the land on which the Cloquet Forestry Center is situated to the Fond du Lac Band. This includes relevant legislation at the state level. There have also been very positive discussions with the band regarding a way to continue the center’s research.
- A successful search for the next chancellor of the Duluth campus has concluded: Dr. Charles Nies will assume the role beginning this summer.
- The docket for today’s University Senate meeting includes the administration’s response to the Workforce Reinvestment Resolution that was endorsed by this body last April. Ettinger thanked Mary Rohman Kuhl, senior director, Total Rewards, Office of Human Resources; and Beth Lewis, vice provost, Faculty and Academic Affairs, who co-chaired the task force that was charged with making recommendations regarding the response.

6. Questions to the President

*Interim President Jeffrey Ettinger*

Colleen Flaherty Manchester, past chair, Senate Consultative Committee, commented that the authors of the Workforce Reinvestment Resolution envisioned it as aiming to address shared issues and common challenges faced by employees across groups in the University system. Yet, in the response, segmentation is emphasized, with what seems like a type of “hole plugging” for different employee groups in different ways, omitting this broader view of challenges faced across employees. She asked why a presidential initiative was not part of the response, given this would be the structure to break down silos and look holistically at the problem; and how senate leadership can most effectively engage the next administration in taking a holistic and strategic view on investing in the workforce.

Ettinger responded that there was no directive to the task force from the Office of the President to only do easy and/or inexpensive things, but the reality is that this will require more resources, significantly beyond the current budget ask. Focusing on things that are already in place or that
do not require additional resources are more viable. Ettinger agreed to urge incoming president Dr. Rebecca Cunnigham to continue the conversation.

Charles Rank, Civil Service senator, asked what accountability measures the administration has in mind to gauge success, especially in requests under Category 0 and 1? Ettinger said he would like to defer this question until the next meeting when the co-chairs of the task force will be present.

Scott Creer, P&A senator, inquired about UMPD being first responders for 911 calls in the Twin Cities campus area; specifically, he asked how the University is paying for these expanded services.

Ettinger said that this is a pilot program, and UMPD has effectively been doing it for about a year, with overtime for UMPD officers. He acknowledged that if this pilot program is continued in the future, there would need to be additional resources allocated for it.

Regarding the dependent tuition benefit in the Workforce Reinvestment Resolution, Sarah Buchanan, faculty senator from Morris, remarked that, although it would be costly, education is a social good. She also remarked that most Big 10, state schools, etc. offer this benefit to their employees.

7. Provost’s Report

Executive Vice President and Provost Rachel Croson

Executive Vice President and Provost Rachel Croson provided the following updates:

- South Dakota has pulled out of the reciprocity agreement with Minnesota. Students from Minnesota will no longer receive in-state tuition in South Dakota, but will be eligible for the South Dakota Promise Program. The University will preserve in-state tuition for current students from South Dakota and those entering for fall 2024. Administrators are working on what to do moving forward.
- Due to changes to the FAFSA and the whole federal financial aid program, financial aid information is delayed, resulting in students not knowing their aid packages in time for typical decision deadlines. Most institutions, including the University, have extended decision deadlines.
- New gainful employment and financial transparency regulations are coming out of the Department of Education (DoE) that would require universities, beginning in July 2024, to report debt information and majors of their graduates. The DoE would then cross reference that information with tax records with the aim of identifying programs that do not have a sufficiently good return on investment. Students entering into these programs may be required in the future to sign a waiver acknowledging that they understand that they are entering a program that does not have a good financial return. These regulations are really aimed at the for-profit educational industry, but will have implications for certain majors at all institutions. The University is working with the Big 10 peers to monitor the situation and advocate for exclusions as appropriate.

8. Questions to the Provost
Executive Vice President and Provost Rachel Croson

Adolfo Carrillo Cabello, P&A senator from the College of Liberal Arts, asked for an update on the universal access proposal. Croson said that the work group is analyzing feedback received during consultation in order to make a decision. If the decision is made to move ahead with the proposal, it would go to the Board of Regents in May or June.

9. Senate Consultative Committee Report
Professor Mark Bee, chair, Senate Consultative Committee

Professor Mark Bee, chair, Senate Consultative Committee (SCC), reported on several recent SCC actions and topics of discussion:

- **University Senate Rules Amendment:** The current rules allow the person making the motion on the docket to accept, on the floor, amendments they consider to be friendly. No discussion or vote is required. This is a departure from Robert's Rules of Order that is codified in the University Senate Rules, as well as the rules of the Faculty and Student Senates. After our last senate meeting, a P&A senator proposed that the SCC consider amending the University Senate rules to require all amendments – including friendly amendments – be discussed and voted on. The SCC discussed this proposal with the senator and referred the proposal to the informal group of consultative committee chairs and vice chairs from each senate. That group will meet to gauge the level of interest in the proposal and also to assess the possibility of making the rules consistent across all five senates. Any proposed rules changes would, of course, need to be discussed and voted on by the relevant consultative committees and senates. No action is being taken at this time but the discussion is ongoing.

- **Campus Safety Committee:** The SCC also heard an update from Professor Edgar Arriaga, chair of the Campus Safety Committee. He reported on some of the work that committee has been doing this year to define what it would mean to have a Culture of Campus Safety that could encompass all aspects of safety on our five campuses. Arriaga will bring this topic to a future University Senate meeting.

- **EAD Charge:** And finally, the SCC discussed some proposed edits to the formal charge of the Equity, Access and Diversity Committee. These edits mostly involve removing language that refers to “affirmative action” in order to bring the charge in line with other policy changes that have been happening after the Supreme Court decision on this issue.

- **Workforce Reinvestment Resolution Response:** The co-chairs of the task force have been invited to the next University Senate meeting to give a presentation on the task force’s report. Bee encouraged senators to read the resolution, response, and task force report and come prepared to have an informed discussion about the administration’s response.

10. Legislative Update
Professor Rob Blair, faculty legislative liaison

Professor Rob Blair, faculty legislative liaison, provided an update about the state legislative session as it pertains to the University. He highlighted the following:

**Funding Requests**
• $500 million in Higher Education Asset Preservation and Replacement (HEAPR) funds.
• Supplemental budget request of $45 million in FY25 to minimize tuition increases for students; retain talented faculty and staff through increased compensation; invest in more student services such as counseling, advising, and academic support; maintain safe, functional, and accessible classrooms and facilities; and support research and technology infrastructure.
• Additional supplemental budget request of $80 million to support the academic health enterprise, including healthcare in underserved communities; expansion of education and workforce development opportunities; transformation of primary care; and rural health clinical trials network and pre-hospital care network.

**Bills**

- RISE Act (HF4565), a bill specifying documentation and other requirements for higher education students with a disability.
- HF4392, Minimum wage protections established for people with disabilities.
- (SF3986/HF4193) Cloquet Forestry Center transfer
- (SF4597) Public Employment Labor Relations Act (PELRA)

**PELRA**

- PELRA is the law that regulates labor relations between public employers, their employees, and the labor organizations that represent their employees. It divides the employees of the University into 13 distinct groups. A majority of the employees in a bargaining group can vote to unionize.
- SF4597 proposes to revise PELRA to amend the definition of “public employee” and allow worker self-determination in deciding their bargaining units. The size of self-determined units is not defined.
- The changes would impact faculty, P&A, and civil service employee groups.
- This could impact shared governance if groups decide to unionize, because unionized units do not participate in shared governance (e.g. Crookston and Duluth faculty).

Ellen Messer-Davidow, faculty senator from the College of Liberal Arts, asked why unionized groups do not participate in shared governance. She suggested making efforts to change that. Blair responded that the decision about unionized groups not participating in shared governance was a decision made by the Board of Regents when the Crookston and Duluth faculty unionized (in the 1980s). Bee noted that he agreed about trying to change this rule, and that further discussions around this could take place in the fall.

11. Resolution on Supporting a Substance Misuse Recovery Community on Campus *(Action by the University Senate)*

*Professor Jennifer McComas, chair, Disabilities Issues Committee*

**Background:**

Professor Jennifer McComas, chair, Disabilities Issues Committee, provided background information and the rationale for the committee’s [resolution on supporting a substance misuse recovery community on campus](https://example.com).
This resolution has been endorsed by the Equity, Access, and Diversity Committee; the Social Concerns Committee; and the Student Senate Consultative Committee. The resolution is before the senate for discussion at this meeting, with a vote planned for the April 25, 2024 meeting.

**Discussion:**
Tom Hegbloom, faculty senator from the College of Continuing and Professional Studies (CCAPS), noted that he is a licensed alcohol and drug counselor. He underscored the importance of connection and community for students in recovery, and voiced his support of the resolution.

Kathleen Boris-Lawrie, faculty senator from the College of Veterinary Medicine, voiced her support and urged the committee to think about how the position would be funded. McComas said that figuring out how to find the position is not in the committee’s purview, but that it is a relatively modest ask.

12. **Letter to State Legislators (Information for the University Senate)**
On March 8, 2024, the leaders of the five consultative committees sent letters to the members of the Minnesota State House Higher Education Finance and Policy Committee and Senate Higher Education Committee supporting the University’s supplemental budget request.

13. **Letter to UMAA (Information for the University Senate)**
On March 18, 2024, the SCC sent a letter to the Board of Directors of the University of Minnesota Alumni Association (UMAA), in recognition of the UMAA’s 120 year anniversary.

14. **University Senate Old Business**
None

15. **University Senate New Business**
None

16. **University Senate Adjournment**
Ettinger adjourned the meeting at 3:46 p.m.

Amber Bathke
University Senate Office