Minutes*

Senate Committee on Educational Policy
Wednesday, October 3, 2012
2:00 – 4:00
510 Morrill Hall

Present: Alon McCormick (chair), Thomas Brothen, Lee-Ann Breuch, Megan Chock, Emily Combs, Charlene Ellingson, Robert McMaster, Nic McPhee, Thomas Michaels, Kristen Nelson, Jane Phillips, Leslie Schiff, Henning Schroeder, Elaine Tarone, Cathrine Wambach, Susan Wick

Absent: Barbara Brandt, John Cwodzinski

Guests: Tina Falkner, Susan Van Voorhis (Academic Support Resources); Tracy Smith (Office of the General Counsel)

Other: Ole Gram (Office of the Provost)

[In these minutes: (1) report of the chair; (2) program assessment; (3) survey of St. Paul campus students; (4) student-release data and the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act]

1. Report of the Chair

Professor McCormick convened the meeting at 2:00 and reported on several items.

-- At the Faculty Consultative Committee retreat, the president issued a gentle challenge in the spirit of operational excellence: He asked if governance committees could get the same work done with slightly fewer meetings (e.g., 10%) and that committees use ex officio members' time as wisely as possible (such as reviewing reports before meetings and then devoting time to discussion rather than presentation). In that vein, because he will be out of town and there are no agenda items currently scheduled for the October 31 meeting, should it be cancelled?

Professor Nelson suggested that the Committee could establish a custom that presentations would be limited to ten minutes. If it could do so, there could be less reporting if Committee members would read materials ahead of time. Professor Wambach said that when there are slides or other materials presented, they could also be attached to the minutes. (It was pointed out that attachments can create technical difficulties with email.) Vice Provost McMaster said it was a good idea but some topics simply take more time.

-- Professor Brothen reported that he had heard that Vice President Studham, the University's Chief Information Office (CIO), is looking into a replacement for Moodle. Vice Provost McMaster, asked about the idea, said that it is something the Committee needs to take up with Mr. Studham; Professor Schiff said it seemed as if that decision should be in Dr. McMaster's office.

* 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 represents the views of, nor are they binding on, the Senate, the Administration, or the Board of Regents.

One way agenda items come to the Committee is that people hear about issues, Professor McCormick observed, and he suggested that Professor Brothen learn more and report back. Ms. Phillips said she has been hearing odd rumors about e-education and that it would be helpful if the Committee learned about that topic as well. Vice Provost McMaster said, apropos of e-education, that there is a sense that the University should be doing more but there is no institutional position on e-education. There are several offices looking into it.

Professor McCormick noted that Professor Cramer, last year's Faculty Consultative Committee chair, is working half-time on e-education matters and will be coming to the next meeting of this Committee with a proposal. He has asked that as Committee members hear about discussions on e-education, they let the provost know.

-- Professor McCormick inquired if a proposed action plan for grades had Committee support. First, express support for the 1999 resolution: "Each college, department and program should discuss what the standards of the Uniform Grading Policy mean for its courses and programs, and what expectations the faculty have of students in their field of knowledge in order to achieve those standards." Vice Provost McMaster will be asked to forward questions from the Committee to the associate deans for undergraduate education and be provided the data analysis tools they need. Units would be asked to consider what an A grade means. What would be new is that this Committee would ask to hear back from Vice Provost McMaster or the associate deans. Professors Wambach and Wick have volunteered to draft questions.

Second, with respect to the FCC request for a change in the transcript to provide the context for grades: There are a number of levels at which context can be provided, including providing grading data; the Committee needs to decide what it believes educationally useful to provide and has asked a subcommittee to have a discussion with Ms. VanVoorhis, Dr. Falkner, and Vice Provost McMaster about what grading data the University should make available.

-- On the issue of financial aid and student indebtedness, what do faculty need to know in order to give advice to students? What do advisers need to know? To consider the matter in detail will help to understand the data and the Committee needs feedback from faculty and advisers; there is need for Committee volunteers to help develop information. Dr. Falkner said that Academic Support Resources would help with any data that might be needed.

2. Program Assessment

Professor McCormick turned to the topic of program assessment and recalled that the Committee has been invited by Provost Hanson to be thoughtful about what it believes should be included in any program-assessment metrics. What recommendations does the Committee wish to make to the administration? There has been planning on the part of Vice Provosts McMaster and Schroeder so he asked them to give the Committee their thoughts.

Dr. McMaster began by saying that they have been having discussions and he has a few thoughts to share with the Committee.

Undergraduate program review will be new at the University. There is a long history of program reviews, coordinated through the Graduate School and focused on graduate education. When

he was chair of Geography, the department went through a program review, and he thought at the time that it was a missed opportunity to look at all aspects of the department—undergraduate, graduate, faculty, and budgets—when there were experts on campus to look at the department. Provost Hanson has asked Vice Provost Schroeder and him to look at a more comprehensive way to evaluate departments and to include both undergraduate and graduate programs. The expectation is that by May they will have a plan for such reviews and there is an opportunity for the Committee to provide the provost with its thoughts.

There already exists significant data on undergraduate education by department that can be used—number of majors, number of graduates, graduation rates, degree requirements, "excessive" degree requirements, and rich data from SERU (Student Experience in the Research University; the University has been provided data for three years, so is developing a longitudinal picture). At the same time, Dr. McMaster said, there are data that are not compiled, such as nature of advising (both lower and upper level), career placement, bottlenecks to graduation, and effect of advanced credit. Does "not compiled" mean not centrally, Ms. Phillips asked? Some departments may have the data, Dr. McMaster responded, but he believed many do not.

The Twin Cities campus will be going through an assessment project for the 2015-16 accreditation, and one of major questions the Higher Learning Commission is asking is how well the seven Student Learning Objectives are infused into the curriculum and major. They are starting a project to assess that infusion, the relationship with the liberal-education requirements, and the effect of the Writing Enriched Curriculum on writing effectiveness. Many departments go through accreditation, he noted, and have a great deal of data, but they are not in a common format.

Last year, during a presentation on undergraduate issues to the Board of Regents, one question was what the University does to assess its undergraduate programs. The answer was that such assessments are not comprehensively and systematically done, so this is an opportunity to incorporate reviews along with those of graduate programs. They could be a huge benefit to the University, a robust and comprehensive system of program assessment for undergraduate programs.

Are there points on which the Committee could be helpful, Professor McCormick asked? Dr. McMaster said they will raise issues as they go along.

Professor Brothen asked what would be done to evaluate a major. That is a question on the table, Dr. McMaster responded. For example, the Carlson School looks at whether its graduates are employed, an important question for them.

Professor Wambach said it will be important to identify the audience for the assessment before the process starts. One audience is the Board of Regents. It is easy to assemble a lot of data, but what will it be used for? The University should have a clear idea of the purpose before it starts reviews. Dr. McMaster said that is an excellent question. In the case of his department, the purpose was to ensure that the undergraduates are receiving the best possible education. The process could include looking at GRE scores, Professor Wambach suggested.

Professor McPhee said that they have been "swimming in the swamp of assessment" for ten years because of the North Central Association [of which the Higher Learning Commission is a part, the body that conducts accreditation reviews of "degree-granting post-secondary educational

institutions in the North Central region"]. He agreed the audience is crucial. There has been pushback on his campus because program reviews are a lot of work and no one is sure anyone is paying attention. The University needs to be clear what it is doing and why—and not create heavy demands on time and resources.

Professor Nelson said, apropos of goals, that she has been doing a lot of program evaluation. Faculty are supportive of evaluation if goals are clear and it helps them make strategic decisions about what new ideas/initiatives to invest limited time and resources in. Dr. McMaster said he would add an item to the list: The role of e-learning in the major. Professor McCormick said the Committee could sharpen the questions on what the reviews are trying to learn.

Vice Provost Schroeder said that many institutions believe that if they do not define the outcomes of graduate education, someone else will. Faculty and students should be engaged in defining the learning-outcome goals, not merely what can be easily measured. Professor McPhee agreed and pointed out that will take a lot of time.

Vice Provost Schroeder noted that he, Vice Provost McMaster, and the provost's office are working to develop a preliminary action plan for program reviews. In addition, initial discussions of graduate student learning outcomes have begun with appropriate internal experts; others will be included as those discussions continue. They are also gathering information on assessment models from other schools.

Dr. Schroeder provided copies of four slides he had recently used at a meeting of the AAU graduate deans to talk about the Graduate Review and Improvement Process (GRIP), which allows programs to define discipline-specific metrics and outcomes using qualitative data and how funding allocations were made to colleges based on "discipline-independent, quantitative measures" for the current fiscal year. He said it is not bad to flag programs in terms of why they are "up" or "down," but those have been quantitative measures that do not reflect learning outcomes. He noted questions surrounding the measurement of intangibles in graduate education and research, such as originality and innovation, intellectual risk-taking, opportunities to "fail or explore dead ends," and the crossing of disciplinary boundaries. There are elements of doctoral programs that are not quantitative, Dr. Schroeder observed, and it is in identifying and assessing those that the help of the Committee is needed.

GRIP could be expanded to undergraduate programs; faculty and students could do a backward design, define the program goals, and then look at what the program should provide to reach those goals and whether there is evidence that changes have improved outcomes. Programs must define outcomes for themselves—first they need to define the goals and then figure out ways to measure them.

External program reviews have devolved to the colleges so that they have more say over them, Dr. Schroeder said, but the University needs to have a set of expectations or guidelines so that in 2015 (for accreditation of the Twin Cities campus) it has information available across colleges . So there are a number of principles, questions, and issues that need to be addressed (clear articulation of the purpose of program reviews, the key question each program must address is "why does this program exist at the University?" external program review is only part of the holistic evaluation, colleges should be the main drivers for program review, what are the core data and information that will be

gathered, roles and responsibilities need to be defined, how will data and metrics be used in addition to external reviews, what are the "triggers" for program review, should colleges undergo periodic review as well, and should the coordinate campuses be involved at the outset). The process is in its infancy and there is no central draft of guidelines or expectations yet, he said.

Professor Wambach said this idea comes out of a long process of discussions and task forces on assessing programs. As for the question about what would trigger a review, one trigger would be programs perceived to be lower quality by comparison to national and internal data. Dr. Schroeder agreed; a decision to continue a program is in the hands of the faculty, as is changes in strategic direction. So the Graduate School would have a role in pulling the trigger, Professor Wambach asked? The provost's office would, Dr. McMaster said. Dr. Schroeder agreed. The guidelines are provostal expectations about how program reviews should take place in the colleges. Should they be expected every 7-10 years? How much detail should they include? The expectations will be in place by 2015.

Professor Tarone said, apropos centralization versus devolution, that as someone who operates between two colleges, it is clear to her that it is possible for a graduate program, even one that serves the mission of the university as a whole, to no longer be a priority of the college it is located in – while at the same time be prioritized in another college. If one goes beyond a college, central administration is still responsible for articulating the mission of the entire University. She said she has heard nothing about the importance of central mission values in assessing whether such programs should continue to exist, and if so how. Vice Provost Schroder said he also worries about the lack of mission as a factor at the central level and said he would be supporting of having mission statement about what a program wants to accomplish in doctoral expectations independent of discipline. Ontario has separate Graduate Degree Level Expectations (GDLEs) for PhD and master's programs that are discipline-independent and could inform the process at the University of Minnesota as well.

Ms. Phillips expressed concern that the trigger not only be "bad" programs, because then the process will only study bad programs and only know what should not be done. She said she would prefer a plan to review programs every 7-10 years in order to learn what programs are doing right as well. Dr. Schroeder concurred.

Professor Wambach said what Professor Tarone is concerned about is a theme in restructuring graduate education, the possible feeling that a program is not seen as fit if a college restructures, although it could be argued that the program has a special purpose even if the college changes its priorities. How do programs that have value relocate when colleges change priorities? Another question is how colleges allocate resources to graduate programs, something the Committee could talk about for the next 50 years. Dr. Schroeder said that a college cannot simply discontinue a program; there is a process to go through. They can if they cut off the dollars—a college can starve a program, Professor Tarone pointed out; the official process can be trivial. Dr. Schroeder said that with central guidelines, there will be mechanisms to protect intercollege programs or programs that would not receive support if left between competing colleges. The draft recommendations will address Professor Tarone's concerns.

Dr. McMaster said that on the point about systematic comprehensive reviews, in theory that would be a wonderful process. But when one thinks about the resources that would be required, he would suggest that some trigger mechanism should be needed. If a department is doing well, it should not take a lot of time to review. If it is not broken, don't fix it. The Graduate School did reviews every

seven years—although, Dr. Schroeder pointed out, some programs were never reviewed, or at least not within that time frame. Dr. McMaster said that it is the provost's view that reviews should be handled by the college but that there needs to be consistent reviews across colleges so that they can be compared on a select number of items. Dr. Schroeder agreed, key questions that every program must answer.

Professor McCormick reported that the Faculty Consultative Committee had recently met with a group of the Twin Cities deans; these reviews were a topic of discussion. What will be done with the reviews is a complex question. What this Committee can focus on is what it wants included, rather than what will happen with the reviews once completed.

Professor McPhee alluded to the principles, questions, and issues that Dr. Schroeder had itemized: It is his sense that the Higher Learning Commission does not care about them. They talk about student learning and assessing—what learning is occurring at the level of individual courses. That is fine-grained information that takes a lot more time to collect. Officially there is a program review at Morris every seven years but there are no external reviews because there are no funds to pay for them. As for Dr. Schroeder's last point, should the coordinate campuses be included form the outset, it would probably be a good idea but it could be complicated because the campuses have different goals.

Professor Tarone said the argument that regular reviews are too expensive may rest on the assumption that external review teams have to travel to the campus and spend several days here. However, just as professors are being urged to use e-learning in their courses, so also should the administration be urged to consider distance review teams that can exploit the rich technology infrastructure now available on campus.

Professor Michaels said that he did not know if reviews should be regular or only of departments with problems, but whenever they occur, faculty attitudes will be critical: What they see they will get out of the review will determine what they put into it. It may not be likely that there would be new positions, but if enough faculty members see the need for or opportunity for change—curricular change, a change in graduate student support—the review can bring out faculty ideas and help avoid defensive or conservative responses to a review. Dr. Schroeder said that is why GRIP is in process because it is not intended to provoke a defensive response.

Vice Provost Schroeder said, in response to Professor McPhee's comment, that the University will be asked if it has mechanisms to review programs; this goes beyond that to identify what should change, not to punish or penalize or to generate money.

One way to make sure that the faculty are defensive is to do program reviews only when problems are identified, Professor Tarone said. The way to avoid that reaction is to do them regularly for all programs, and use reviews to invite the faculty to think creatively.

The purpose is critical, Professor Wambach repeated. If the faculty in a department see an opportunity to revitalize and enrich a program, they will have a positive attitude, as opposed to reporting to an unknown organization, which they will see as a waste of time. They must know what the purpose is and that it will be beneficial.

Is the Committee's role to help formulate questions, Professor Breuch asked? It is, Dr. McMaster affirmed. How is it to do that, Professor Breuch inquired? Professor McCormick said that one possibility would be for two or three Committee members to meet with Vice Provosts McMaster and Schroeder and then bring ideas back to the Committee—and the two vice provosts do not need to keep reporting at meetings.

Professor Schiff observed that there are a lot of projects where faculty members are asked to do things and they get crabby when they are asked to do the same thing three times. The questions need to be asked once. Program reviews will require collecting considerable data, and most faculty members do not collect data about student learning for each class. That effort needs to be coordinated.

Ms. Ellingson commented that they have done a lot of reviews in K-12 education. If faculty feel the review process is meaningful work, and the colleges can feel they maintain some sense of autonomy, and seeing the review as a way to showcase the work of the department will help get buy-in.

Ms. Phillips commented that one challenge is to decide what not to do while the faculty and staff are doing what is needed for the program review—which will take faculty and staff time. What else are they doing that could be let go? She said she had no idea what people might let go while engaged in a program review.

One point they have discussed, Dr. Schroeder noted, is what the administration can meaningfully ask the colleges to collect and what information the University already has. These should not be 1000-page studies and the result shelved; the reviews must address Higher Learning Commission needs but also must help departments get better. Professor McPhee said that data collection is time consuming and they often find that central data are wrong and need to be fixed—and people are not happy when the data cannot be fixed.

Professor McCormick summarized: There will be high expectations for good-quality data, there need to be meaningful questions, and there needs to be a lot of faculty/staff participation in identifying the questions. He thanked Vice Provosts McMaster and Schroeder and said that liaisons with the Committee will be identified and participate in other meetings—and then report back to this Committee.

3. Survey of St. Paul Campus Students

Professor McCormick reported that the Committee has another request from the Faculty Consultative Committee. There have been discussions about the future of the St. Paul campus, and FCC has asked this Committee to pursue the question of student educational experiences and course offerings on the St. Paul campus. For example, more courses could be offered on St. Paul or the University could provide "hotel space" for faculty and staff who are housed on one campus but must spend time on the other. FCC asked if SCEP would do a survey of graduate and undergraduate students to learn what they would like to see on the St. Paul campus. He said he did not know the timing but there are plans afoot for St. Paul and FCC wants to be sure that faculty and student opinions are included. The goal is not to collect "a ton of data."

Professor Wambach suggested asking the Office of Institutional Research if it has any data, and wild-card questions could be added to SERU. Dr. Falkner said that exit surveys of students could also be examined. She reported that they could schedule more classes in St. Paul but they are unable to get people to go over there to teach. She suggested learning what students want but they do not want to open the possibility of additional course offerings in St. Paul if no one will teach them. There is the assumption that students want more classes in St. Paul, Ms. VanVoorhis commented, but classes in St. Paul do not fill up as fast as they do in Minneapolis.

Professor Nelson suggested asking students about classrooms and about the number of times they must travel each day—it costs students 40 minutes each time they have to back and forth between the two campuses. Ask how they would design a dorm or study space. Students come up with great ideas.

What would make the campus more attractive so that students would want to spend more time there, Professor McCormick asked? A conference hotel, a tram, dorms, shops, and restaurants, Professor Wambach commented—it could be a desirable destination. Transportation and the lack of amenities are the problem. Professor Tarone pointed out that a number of faculty members live next to the St. Paul campus; not all would object to teaching there. That may be true but they receive a lot of pushback when they try to offer courses in St. Paul, Dr. Falkner reported.

4. Student-Release Data and the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act

Professor McCormick turned now to Tracy Smith from the Office of the General Counsel to discuss the relationship between the student-release questions data and the Minnesota Data Practices Act (MDPA). He noted that at present the University has an opt-in system (faculty members must affirmatively act to release the data); could it change to an opt-out system (in which faculty members would have to act affirmatively to prevent the release of the data)?

The student-release questions are these (from the policy Evaluation of Teaching, at http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/TEACHINGEVALUATION.html):

1. Approximately how many hours per week do you spend working on homework, readings, and projects for this course?
    - o 0-2 hours per week
    - o 3-5 hours per week
    - o 6-9 hours per week
    - o 10-14 hours per week
    - o 15 or more hours per week
2. Compared to other courses at this level, the amount I have learned in this course is
    - o less.
    - o about the same.
    - o more.
    - o I have not taken other courses at this level.
3. Compared to other courses at this level, the difficulty of this course is
    - o less.
    - o about the same.
    - o more.

- o I have not taken other courses at this level.

4. I would recommend this course to other students.
   - o Yes
   - o No
5. I would recommend this instructor to other students.
   - o Yes
   - o No

Rate your instructor in terms of the following characteristics.

	Agree	**Somewhat Agree**	**Somewhat Disagree**	**Disagree**	**Not Applicable**
6. Is approachable					
7. Makes effective use of course readings					
8. Creates worthwhile assignments					
9. Has a reasonable grading system					

Ms. Smith began by confirming that the issues arise in connection with the personnel data provision of the MGDPA and pointed out that not all of the information in the student-release questions is personnel data and could be disclosed. Some of the questions seek evaluation of a course, or ask the students to describe their own experience in the course. That information is not personnel data. But questions that seek evaluation of an instructor do result in information that is private personnel data about that instructor. Whenever the University collects evaluative data about an employee, even if it cannot be used in personnel decisions, the person evaluated must authorize public release.

The question (with respect to an opt-out system) is whether there can be assent by silence, Ms. Smith said. She read from the language of the MGDPA and said the law is quite clear that there must be a reasonable effort to obtain informed consent—and it would be difficult to interpret silence as consent. So an opt-out system would not be acceptable for instructor-related questions.

Dr. Falkner inquired if questions 5-9 were decoupled from questions 1-4, or if questions 5-9 were recast so they were not related to the evaluation of the instructor but were instead learning-related, would that make them acceptable? Ms. Smith said it would but surmised that what students want is instructor-related information.

Professor McCormick asked Professor Wambach for a history of the questions that are on the form. Professor Wambach recalled that there were many problems with the previous Student Evaluation of Teaching form, so this Committee, with many others including experts in the field, went through a long process to develop new Student Rating of Teaching (SRT) questions that were adopted by the Faculty Senate. The Student Senate, meanwhile, developed a set of student-release questions and asked that they be on the same form as the SRT questions. There was a lot of overlap and redundancy between the two sets of questions, and this Committee worked with the Student Senate to refine them, but the students dug in their heels, which is why the redundancy and overlap exists. That makes the respondents less likely to answer. If the results of the student-release questions could be released automatically, it would be worth going to the Student Senate and developing questions that would provide students the information they want. Professor McCormick said that Ms. Smith inquired

what information students want; he does not know but part of what they want is to learn about the course.

Some of the questions provide information about students, Ms. Smith said, and the University does not need faculty permission to release those data, such as the responses to questions 1-4; the problem is 5-9. The form could be rearranged so that the instructor would only need to authorize the release of data in response to questions 5-9. With 1-4, there could be no choice offered and the University publicizes the results.

Professor McPhee asked about the case of a small course taught only by one person—a student could figure out who the instructor was. That would not matter, Ms. Smith said; the data would not be about the individual, they would be about the student. There could be a small number of students so the results might not be deidentified, Professor McPhee said. The usual standard is that there need to be five people in a cell, Ms. Smith said, so if there were fewer, the data would not be used.

If question #8, for example, were changed to something like "I found the assignments worthwhile," Ms. Phillips asked, would it be acceptable under MGDPA? That framing would take it out of the category of evaluating the instructor, Ms. Smith said. Professor McCormick expressed doubt; Ms. Smith responded that the work of an employee can be criticized—hers, the president's, anyone's—and the question Ms. Phillips posed is more like a criticism of work, not an evaluation of the person. So one could ask if students thought the assignments were worthwhile and helpful, Ms. Phillips concluded. Professor McCormick agreed—and wished that students could be asked the question four years later.

Ms. Combs suggested talking with the Student Senate. Dr. Falkner agreed; if there is no interest there, there is no reason to pursue the matter. Professor McCormick pointed out that the Committee had not reached the point where it had concluded it wished to go in the direction Ms. Smith suggested would be possible; does it? Dr. Falkner said that in her view, based on years of discussion, such a move would be in the spirit of what the students wanted. It was suggested that it might be more appropriate to first raise the question with the Faculty Senate to find out if the faculty would be willing to make such a change; if not, asking the Student Senate about a change would not be a fruitful use of time.

Professor McCormick said he believed the Committee had learned from Ms. Smith that with a slight change in the student-release questions, the data could be released automatically. Should the Committee continue in that direction? Professor Shields suggested that the title of the policy, or of the section, should be changed to Evaluation of Courses or something similar, because the questions would not evaluate teaching. Professor Wambach said the Committee was careful to get away from the notion of the evaluation of teaching and moved to student rating of teaching. Evaluating teaching is complicated. These are the students' questions and they would have to choose to change them. Perhaps let them decide if they wish to start over.

Professor Schiff said that any communication with the students should be framed in the context of the fact that there have been many initiatives to get instructors to release the data and nothing has worked. They should be told that the faculty members on this Committee believe students could be helped with a change such as the one discussed today. Professor McCormick said that not

everything has been done to make release of the data easier for instructors. Asking the Student Senate to consider the issue should not bar efforts to go to the associate deans to find ways to have more of the data released. Dr. Gram reported that the Office of Measurement Services has been asked to develop a splash page on the faculty one-stop for releasing the data; there has been an improvement in how to do so and it has been communicated to everyone each semester by email.

Professor McCormick recalled an idea from Professor Chervany last year, that through the deans and chairs, if staff in departments issued reminders to instructors, the release rate would improve. Professor Wick agreed and said that going through the associate deans would likely not work.

Professor Nelson said the Committee needs to be clear that it is moving forward and that it is concerned about the quality of the data. What about co-teaching, she asked? If one instructor is willing to release the data but the other is not, that is a problem, as is the case when two different faculty members teach the same course—and that is why it is important the questions focus on the course, Professor Nelson concluded. If the question is asked, would the student recommend this course to other students, and there are two instructors for two courses (but the same course), and 90% endorse one instructor and only 20% endorse the other, those results would be difficult to separate from the instructor, Professor Brothen pointed out. They need not be segregated by instructor in the future, Ms. Smith suggested. Professor McPhee said it is not hard to imagine that X teaches a course in the fall and Y teaches it in the spring, and people would know the results for the two different instructors. Ms. Smith said that recommending taking a course is like a poor audit: Everyone knows who the manager of the unit is but the results of the audit are public—they are not personnel data.

Professor Wambach noted that the six required questions (in the policy) are about the instructor and useful for many purposes. The entire form is about the instructor and about the course; the Committee is suggesting that there be two parts, an instructor focus and a course focus.

Professor McCormick suggested continuing the discussion in November, informed by the activities of the Office of Measurement Services. He thanked Ms. Smith for joining the Committee and adjourned the meeting at 4:10.

-- Gary Engstrand

University of Minnesota