
The University Senate

FACULTY • STUDENT • P&A • CIVIL SERVICE

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Social Concerns Committee November 29, 2021 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 reflect the views of, nor are they binding on, the senate, the administration, or the Board of Regents.

[In these minutes: Academic Freedom Resolution; Namings Policy Update; Committee Topics]

PRESENT: Linda Frizzell (chair), Abdifatah Ahmed, Ryan Allen, Katherine Arnold, Iris Borowsky, Mark Collier, Jade Joswick, Kevin Kamau, Jae-Lah Lymon, Maura McGinnity, Jason Meyer, Molly Schwartz, Nicole Smiley, Aaron Sojourner, Meaghan Thul, Boris Volkov, Chelsea Williams

REGRETS: Toni Bennett, Jonathan Sachs

ABSENT: Emily Eaton

1. Academic Freedom Resolution

Professor Linda Frizzell, chair, called the meeting to order, and announced that the committee had approved the [Resolution Concerning Caste-Based Discrimination](#), as discussed at the previous meeting, via electronic vote. She then turned the committee's attention to the [Resolution Defending Academic Freedom as it Relates to Teaching about Race, Gender, Sexuality, and Critical Race Theory at the University of Minnesota](#), also discussed at the previous meeting. Members engaged in a few minutes of discussion about the resolution, but no one made a motion to endorse it.

2. Namings Policy Update

Next, Frizzell updated members on a recent meeting of the Senate Consultative Committee (SCC) on November 22, 2021. Members of the Social Concerns Committee (among others) had been invited to this meeting to participate in consultation on Board of Regents Policy: *Namings and Renamings*. Frizzell remarked that President Joan Gabel did a good job outlining the history of and rationale for the proposed revisions to the policy. She expressed appreciation that the president had been in consultation with tribal leaders with regard to the policy, as well. Linda updated people on the SCC meeting RE Namings policy. President did a good job. Nicole Smiley, who had also been in attendance, noted that some previous members of the Social Concerns Committee had spent considerable time and effort on the issue of renaming Coffman Memorial Union, among other buildings, and the Board of Regents had rejected the

recommendations. Smiley said she was glad to see the policy outline a process for how such proposals would be handled in the future.

3. Committee Topics

Finally, Frizzell suggested that the committee prioritize topics for consideration that had been suggested at previous meetings. The topics were:

- Campus safety (sexual violence within fraternities, Dinkytown crime, police violence issues, etc.); invite Matt Clark, University of Minnesota Police Department (UMPD) chief
- University investments, including transparency
- American Indian relations; invite Karen Diver, senior advisor to the president for Native American affairs, to visit with the committee
- Covid concerns
- University dining; concerns about RFP and selection process; how does the food served on campus represent the community
- Making Narcan more available, train people how to use it
- Job-quality or responsible contractor standard for contractors and subcontractors

Members felt strongly that campus safety, especially with regard to crime in Dinkytown, was important to address, and that should be the topic of the committee's next meeting on January 31, 2022.

Mark Collier commented that many of the ideas previously brainstormed, at least how they were framed currently, were specific to the Twin Cities campus. He cautioned the committee to be mindful of the system campuses.

Members suggested the following additional topics to consider:

- Mental health services available
- Graduate assistant payment/compensation/workload
- University [adaptiveness](#) and preparedness

Hearing no further business, Frizzell adjourned the meeting.

Amber Bathke
University Senate Office