

**FACULTY ASSOCIATION
SPRING GENERAL MEETING**

Thursday, January 5, 2012
Ostrander Auditorium

APPROVED NOTES

Attendance fluctuated throughout the meeting, hitting a peak of 41 members and 2 guests.

Meeting called to order at 3:03 PM

1. Approval of Notes from Fall 2011 General Meeting (August 16, 2011)

Hustoles/Booker: Moved to approve: Passed

2. Graduation Evaluation (Time Certain 3:10 p.m.) Marcuis Brock & Claudia Tomany – (Tomany): We have created a new graduation evaluation form, which takes place of the old hand-written one. In the future, faculty will only have to check the major. The rest will already have been checked over. This form is filled with data from the DARS report. The DARS report has also been changed: all changes (blanket waivers, etc.) will already be in the DARS report; courses registered in the future will also show up in DARS. We are also moving to an online application for graduation.

(Question): Are there places online where faculty can take a look at this document? (Tomany): This was a hasty release, but we would be happy to send the form out to the faculty, and we can place it on the Registrar's website. We are also working on developing a cheat-sheet on how to read the DARS. In terms of procedure, nothing has changed

(Question): I tried to find the form online, but I only found the old form. (Tomany): The old form is still on the web, but is not being used anymore. When students apply, they are given the new form. Substitution form results will also show up on DARS

(Question): Regarding online forms, is it possible to get the substitution waiver forms online as well? (Brock): We tried to get that online a while ago, but it still hasn't happened. Perhaps we can try to push it along. (Tomany): DARS used to be an electronic copy of the printed bulletin; that was a very big issue where the bulletin had to be perfect, which it wasn't. This new system will fix a number of problems as DARS will no longer be an inflexible copy of the bulletin but a more a living document.

(Question): When are grade change forms going to be electronically available? There is no way to mail things down from Edina. (Tomany): If we make these forms available online, it would make these changes much easier. Perhaps we can work with the IFO to make the change to online happen. (Grabowska): I would request that we have the new form sent to the faculty so that we can see it.

3. Faculty Association President's Report

a. Deans - We have a passel of new deans; we are working with them to smooth their entry into our university culture. If you have areas where we could be effective in talking with the deans, we would like to hear about them. The Deans have shown a willingness to listen to the FA, and we hope that continues.

b. Article 11, Section 1; Newly promoted faculty and Salary Equity - Now at the system office. It continues to move forward slowly.

c. Faculty Development Center (Update) - (Patricia Hoffman): I'm really happy to work in this capacity. I want this to be an open door environment, and we hope to be very collaborative with ITS, etc. I'll be moving my office at some point, but not yet. Please come and see me if you have ideas, etc.

d. Looming Issues: Fixed Term and Adjunct Concerns - We just came from a meeting related to adjunct concerns. The University has been looking more at fixed terms and adjuncts. They are part of our union, but we have always supported the hiring of probationary lines over fixed/adjunct faculty. We continue

to advocate for faculty lines. We also continue to advocate for moving the hiring timelines earlier. Our meeting at 2 PM today was due to a competing reading of the contract. The Union has particular reading of the contract regarding hiring adjuncts/fixed terms: administration should offer to give overload to faculty first. If faculty reject the overload, then the administration can proceed to hiring adjuncts/fixed terms. The administration doesn't read it the contract language that way. Resolution of this language interpretation difference may take arbitration.

(Question): SBS will be hiring approximately 10 full time faculty as adjuncts. (Grabowska): MSU,M is the institution with the highest values of fixed terms in the MnSCU system..

(Question): Would it be useful to produce a chart showing the every expanding use of adjuncts? (Grabowska): Yes, that would be useful.

(Question): What have multiple studies shown is the number one factor for student recruitment and retention? Faculty! We need to focus on this argument as the Administration fights for recruitment and retention. This is not a political issue; the Nation data shows that the faculty are the key.

(Question): Data shows that 2012-2013 should be stable, and 2014 won't have a budget cliff, but a budget terrace. The state just came up with a budget surplus. We won't ever get our colleagues refunded, but might we see a restoration of some of the positions? (Grabowska): I am not sure that there are going to be any great numbers coming back, but we will continue to fight for tracks

(Question): Has the president continued to talk about increasing the university from 15,000 to 20,000 students, and who will be teaching them? (Mrja): According to the economic outlook data from November, Straka said that enrollment will go up 1% a year, tuition will go up 3% a year, room and board will go up 5% a year, and state funding will go down by some number...we don't by how much. (Grabowska): The 3% tuition is probably informed by Chancellor Rosenstone's position. In part, the logic behind the growth is that, due to dwindling state funds, we increasingly stand on tuition. By growing, more money flows into to the institution.

(Question): If we have a plan to grow, do we have a plan on how we will accommodate those students academically, especially when we are also being told we increase our research and grant capture? (Grabowska): These are great questions.

(Question): It's not just the 5000 student increase. Are we looking at incoming freshman? Graduate students? Transfer Students? We need to have a non-nebulous term. The colleges need to figure out how we are going to deal with these increases. (Hagemeister): It was my understanding that MnSCU and the Institution don't want to increase the footprint of the colleges, but by increasing the size of enrollments it may become impossible to find rooms to teach these classes. (Grabowska): I don't have the answers to these questions, but it does provide topics for discussion and directions for us to pursue. We can put it on the table to be talked about.

(Question): A few years ago, Olson said we could hold him accountable for the cuts. Where are we compared to the other institutions? Did we do it right? Did we waste a lot of time? (Grabowska): There are some institutions (SW) that are dire straits. It looks like SW may merge with Minnesota West. The reports that the presidents of other institutions provide are not rosy. What we did was upfront. Other institutions are doing it on the back side.

(Question): This is a very important time for planning; we are in dire straits now. (Mrja): We will be giving out one-time money again this year, no other university is doing this. We also run 5-7% reserve.

(Question): The choice of Olson to not address the faculty at Convocation was a poor one. The faculty get information from a variety of different channels. We didn't have the Provost tell us the plan, and tell us what was going on. The president's speech obviously didn't talk about the plan. Waiting until next fall seems like a long time. (Visser): Could we invite the Provost to the meeting this spring? We could get some information from him. (Grabowska): Yes.

e. Web page update & development

We are working with Scott Lassiter to revise the FA website. As soon as we have something to show the faculty, we will make it available. We want this to be an easy point of contact.

f. New CETL Director – Patricia Hoffman – See 3.c.

g. PDP/PDR Workshop? - Is there a need for a PDP/PDR workshop? Again, we have new Deans; how do we transmit information to the new deans? A workshop would be a place where deans would be able to speak about what they think is important, and a way for the FA to educate the Deans. We want fewer surprises. If you see value in such a thing, we are happy to make that happen.

h. Enhance Communications (e-mails) - One of the things that came out of our meeting with the Council of Deans was how might we filter information that comes via email. One suggestion would be that only “critical” information be sent via email, with some sort of intranet clearing house for non-critical information. Please provide input.

i. Information the intent to apply - Students are supposed to put money towards registration, and are dropped because they had not paid. This has been affecting students for whom this requirement was supposed to be waived via a tuition benefit. There is a form called the “Intent to Apply” which keeps the student from being dropped.

(Question): This has been sent out every semester by HR, but people often miss it. (Grabowska): There are disconnected pieces and misinformation out there. Please review this form if you intend on taking advantage of a tuition benefit.

4. Faculty Association Vice-President's Report (Visser) - We've had 3 reports of application of inappropriate disciplinary action last year which have since been downgraded. We had 3 instances of nonrenewal, and they were very sobering. We have stressed the issue of communication between Administration and faculty; trying to make sure we are as transparent as possible. The Administration has been open to hearing our concerns. There will be more issues regarding overload versus adjunct in the future. If you know this is happening, please bring it to our attention. I will be department chair this semester, so my office is changing, but my phone number shall remain the same.

5. New Business/Discussion Items

a. Negotiations Update – Brauer - I want to hear your thoughts on things. Everything that Jim talked about is related to negotiations in one way or another. So far we have reached some tentative agreements about language, but not money. Money won't be discussed until Healthcare Coalition bargaining is complete. In the meantime, we've been trying to deal with several issues. One of the agreements that we can talk about deals with specific language to cut down ambiguity. We've gotten what we wanted; I don't think any of it would have negative consequences for the faculty. Negotiation completion most likely won't happen before summer.

Regarding fixed term – what we are trying to do is get probationary positions for everybody. We want to make fixed term and adjunct appointments less palatable to the administration compared to probationary positions.

One of the items we were able to get tentative agreement on concerned PDP/PDR. MnSCU wanted to mandate that faculty review and respond on other faculty's performance. We have managed to stop this. Relating to the role of chairs: the Administration wants to change the role of chairs into more like associate deans.

(Question): In regards to changing the chairs' roles; please continue to fight that. (Brauer): We are and will. One of the issues with changing the description is that anyone who is a chair would become a supervisor and would thus not be part of the FA/IFO. We realize that is what is going on, and we are fighting it.

(Question): At the last delegate meeting there was talk about domestic partner benefits, is that still part of negotiations? (Brauer): That is part of healthcare, so it is being negotiated by the Healthcare Coalition.

(Question): To speak in favor of retaining adjuncts – they are critical to the delivery of content. There is a place for adjuncts. (Brauer): We recognize that, and they are not going to go away.

(Question): Are their rules for release times for chairs? (Brauer): They are guidelines, and this is also being looked at. We have seen some very strange departments, where incompatible departments are pushed together into one department.

(Question): Is there any more discussion regarding the 24 credit load? (Brauer): That will be in the Administration’s proposal, and we’ll be ready for it.

(Question): Are there any discussions concerning ITV courses? (Brauer): We haven't gotten to it yet, but nontraditional courses (package courses) will be addressed.

(Question): With so many fixed term and adjuncts, advising loads etc., gets pushed onto the full time faculty. Will this be addressed? (Brauer): We would like to, but it would also be considered an economic issue, so we won't be addressing it yet.

(Question): Have new appointments to the Board by the Governor changed things? (Brauer): I think that the other side has been holding regular meetings with the Chancellor, Vice Chancellor, in-house attorneys, and probably some others, but not the trustees. Once the negotiations get settled, then the Chancellor has to sell it to the Board.

(Question): Is there any discussion on compensation for faculty who take part in “nontraditional” courses? Where does this money go? For instance, we work during the summer with graduate students, but we don't get compensated. (Brauer): On different campuses, that money goes to different places. One of our goals is to get all faculty workload lumped into a maximum workload value.

(Question): Independent study classes should also be placed on that list.

(Brauer): Rosenbaum's induction ceremony stated he wanted “deep conversations” with faculty on the campuses. He's already starting to plan how these are going to occur. I do know that the general direction is that on each campus there will be time devoted to conversations about the academic plan for the institutions. Under his watch he says that academics come first, and budget second. Whatever this academic plan is has to come from the faculty. Rather than asking “what is the plan?”, we should ask “when are we going to develop the plan?”. Sometime before the end of the semester, we should be hearing something about what the academic plan for this university might become.

6. Questions / Discussion

7. Information

a. Delegate Assembly – March 23 & 24, 2012 (Resolutions) (Grabowska): We have space for 43 delegates. We do best when we fill our slots. If you are at all interested, please let us know. We'll be writing resolutions for review.

Meeting adjourned at 4:48 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Daniel J. Swart
FA Secretary

MARK YOUR CALENDAR: NEXT FACULTY ASSOCIATION GENERAL MEETING IS SCHEDULED ON THURSDAY, MARCH 29 FROM 2:00 TO 3:00 IN OSTRANDER AUDITORIUM.

