

**FACULTY ASSOCIATION  
FALL GENERAL MEETING**

Tuesday, August 17, 2010

3:00 p.m.

CSU 253-4-5

**UNAPPROVED NOTES**

Attendance fluctuated throughout the meeting, hitting a peak of 80.

FA President Roger Severns called the meeting to order at 3:04 p.m.

**1. Minutes of the General Meeting of February 10, 2009—*Jerry Schneck/Bill Wagner moved to approve. Motion passed.***

**2. Officers' Reports**

**a. President**—Severns: We still have a limited number of 30-minute meetings available with Russ Stanton. They will probably fill up quickly. If you are looking at retirement, you want to take a meeting with Stanton.

Last year was a difficult year for all of us. Twelve of our tenured colleagues received retrenchment notices. We have always heard that if money comes back, perhaps they could return. But we can't really count on the budget to allow for that. This year, hopefully, the worst has already been addressed. We are ahead of the curve in terms of most other campuses. St. Cloud is still dealing with these issues and will probably have more retrenchments than we did. They are even more behind that at Southwest. They have a major budget hurdle. That doesn't make it any easier for us. One thing I can do is to be willing to listen. I will be coming around to dept meetings. Send me an email if you would like me to come and listen to what your issues are. We'll see what we can do from there. Hopefully by listening and sharing information, we can help smooth over the rough spots. We had a retreat last week with the President. I was asked to say a few words. We are all in this together. We are all trying to make this campus a better place to work. If we don't work together, we are all going to have problems. There is a possibility that things will be better in the future. We are not just losing probationary faculty members. The first people affected are adjuncts and fixed terms. While we still have some adjuncts this year, that number is going to go down fairly sharply in the next year or two. It is going to be exacerbated by having fewer permanent faculty. I think the Curriculum Committee will have its work cut out for it. The number of courses we have had in the past years may not be the same. How can we redefine our curriculum and still deliver a quality product? The place to begin that is in your departments. There are things we can do at the campus level. But we can't do things until you bring them to us.

We have 37 new faculty on campus. We have a few receptions coming up for them. We have the highest expectations of them.

**b. Vice President's Report**—Vice President Mary Visser: I look forward to working with your departments. I also serve as your Chief Grievance Officer and we want to stay ahead of any issues. I do have reassigned time to help deal with these. There are several ongoing issues but I have nothing to report at this time. We just want to make sure that your voice is heard. We look forward to working with you. Severns: I look forward to working with Visser. We are hoping to divide the workload so we can provide as much help as possible to everybody. We want to protect everybody's interest.

**c. Treasurer's Report**—Treasurer Lynnette Engswick: the good news is that we have a positive balance. We have about \$1,000, which isn't a lot. I will be very strict about how we spend money. It is critical that we fill the chairs here. Membership is important. Next time, bring a member from your department and help fill these chairs. Severns: I am also the State IFO Treasurer so we are always concerned about squeezing the buck.

### 3. New Business

**a. Budget Update, “The New Normal”**—Severns: At the President’s retreat last week, we heard from the State Demographer and State Economist. They both seemed convinced that while we are not going into a double dip recession, there is a permanent effect on the state economy. We have a \$7 billion deficit in FY12. They did talk about deferral of state funds for K-12 education. That could take care of less than half of this figure. But all of these deferrals have already been tried. There is a real deficit of \$4 to \$5 billion. They seemed to make the argument, in a very non-partisan way, that it would be impossible to deal with this through only tax increases or through reduction in spending. The prospects for increase funding for higher ed is very doubtful. The 800lb gorilla in the room is health care. Revenues will not match increased expenses in health care obligations. It will become increasingly difficult for the legislature to fund at current levels. Last year was the first year that the number of high school graduates started to decline. They showed us series of projections over the next decade and it is a significant drop. They talked about the difference in populations. The traditional white high school students graduate at a 60% rate. The proportion is expected to change. Underrepresented areas in the population, whether Latino or African, will have an increased proportion but their graduation rates are much lower. Our traditional clientele is decreasing. It will be an incredibly difficult time to recruit students. We are going to have to recruit students more intensively, pay more attention to retention levels and design programs more for non-traditional students. When the recession is over, it is not going to go back to the way it was. The “new normal” will look different. While it might be desirable to be where we were five years ago, that is not going to happen. What we do is going to have to change, and fairly quickly to meet new challenges. We have to rethink who our students are and where they are coming from. We might have to rethink remedial education. The President mentioned a second campus in the Twin Cities. That’s where the students are. We will have to think about all of this and where are we going to be 3 or 5 years from now. We all need to participate in thinking about what’s happening. Participate in committees and share with your colleagues.

**b. Negotiations for the Next Contract**—Donna Brauer (FA Negotiator): We’ve had a preliminary meeting already this summer. There is a timeline in. The team has decided not to meet until January or early February. The Chancellor’s office is unwilling to negotiate prior to the beginning of May because of the Legislature. The reality is that there is not going to be a lot of money. The focus is going to be on language. We expect the Chancellor’s office will want to change some language issues. One will be the dreaded 9-month contract that is really unworkable. There is also technology and intellectual property. We have some new folks in the Chancellor’s office who are creating some problems. I will keep you apprised but you won’t hear anything until next year. Visser: Will we be able to negotiate anything about workload? Brauer: Yes, that was in our opener last year. We are going to look at that. We are going to try to do something for fixed term faculty. There are a lot of issues on the table. Sometimes we had to give up language items for money in the past. We’ll see this year. Even though we have Delegate Assembly items, sometimes they won’t even discuss the issues. Ellen Mrja: I’m on the Budget Committee. Last time we said we would stick with the status quo. I felt we didn’t even negotiate last time. We’ve worked very, very hard. We can’t be so polite that we once again say that we will just do it the easy way. Brauer: That wasn’t the easy way. We think things would have been much worse had we gone into negotiations last time. No other union did as well as we did. We had to calculate whether we wanted to take the risk of just going with the status quo last time. There were very real risks that we would have had a pay cut. We always go in with a list of all the things we, as faculty, want. But there are times when you have to know who will support you in the Legislature. Hindsight is 20/20 but, at the time, knowing that other unions were going to lose, we made the choice. Severns: By keeping the current contract we kept the “geezer” steps and added a salary review process. Nothing was taken from sabbaticals. Just because we took 0/0 last time, doesn’t mean we are going to start there. The Chancellor would like to settle the contract before he retires. What’s to our best advantage? Some Trustees might change after the next election. Lee Cornell: I’m worried about freezing budgets or salaries, while we could get raises with bigger layoffs. The contract before this one was relatively generous but before that they weren’t. Severns: By the time we get to our Spring Meeting, I probably will only be able to report that we are still talking. I was on the

Negotiations Committee for several terms. One time we drew it out, hoping the state would improve—and it did. I can assure you that we will be talking about all of this.

**c. Chancellor's Search**—Severns: Lori Lamb, late of our campus, is having a major impact on this search. The Trustees seem to prefer a short term, “professional” Chancellor, perhaps without an academic background. They are going to hire a professional search firm. We need to recognize that while Provost Scott Olson is scheduled to come back at the end of this academic year, MnSCU could look very different. They need to do some budget cutting in the Chancellor's office and they need to do some reorganization. They have a silo mentality. This search is more important than most people realize. This could have a huge impact on us. You will hear more about this in future months.

**d. Students First/Transfer Issues**—Severns: There are things in Students First that certainly have value. But there are things that are both difficult and expensive. Now they have a system whereby a student in the state can register for any credits in the state system, and call that a program. There are an enormous number of difficulties if they do that, not the least of which are accrediting issues. A lot of this has been done through Articulation Agreements. They seem to want to have syllabi for every course in some central location so that some administrator can make these determinations. Brauer (also our IFO Academic Affairs Rep): the Chancellor's office has a policy that all course outlines have to be posted on a campus website. There is also a MnSCU policy that the syllabus is the intellectual property of the professor. There is a difference between course outlines and course syllabi. You will hear more about this. There is the Learning Object Repository. You can upload an activity to this LOR. While it might be admirable, MnSCU is going to claim they own it. It might be that you will have to pay for your own activity, anything that could be marketed. You have to be really careful. If you are approached to participate in any of these things, be very careful. We will try to keep you abreast of that. If you ever get a chance, you should go to a Board of Trustees meeting. It will be a real eye opener. None of them are academics. It is a totally different mind set. And it doesn't help that a lot of folk in MnSCU come out of community colleges. Mike Bentley: Some of the classes that are being taught at community colleges are really not being taught at the collegiate level. Severns: We have to be able to verify what is being taught. Unidentified Speaker: Intellectual property rights—we have to make sure that we stay on this especially regarding technology. Severns: We have an attorney working on this. For the science areas particularly, MnSCU has taken the position that they own part of that. We are working hard on this. Don Friend: I have been working on the Minnesota Modeling Institute. MnSCU is all right with copyright but they don't have a clue regarding patents. They are not prepared. To develop a patent costs a lot of money. But maybe we need to own it outright. Severns: But they say that if they give us an office, they own the intellectual property. Bentley: Should we start copyrighting our course materials? Severns: We suggest that you do put some identification on anything you put out there. Bentley: When I publish, I have to sign off and give the rights to the journal. Severns: I'm not in SET, but this is the kind of issue we are working on. Jim Wilde: In business, the business owns the property. Friend: At the University of Minnesota, they lose money on patents. There are very few who make money. MnSCU is not ready for this.

**e. Article 11, section 1: Newly Promoted Faculty and Salary Equity**—Severns: This is new this year. There is a four-step process for newly promoted faculty. You get your two steps. Then the salary is run through a calculator that will give you a range that is appropriate. Then they look at the rest of the department and make sure the individual is in that range. After that is done on campus, it goes to a committee made up of IFO and MnSCU to make sure the campus did it right. This goes into effect this year. Not all the HR Departments are up to speed, but if you got promoted this year, you should get a salary review. If you have any questions, contact Visser or me.

#### **f. Questions/Discussion**

**1. Other Campuses**—Barbara Keating: If the other campuses have not initiated the retrenchment process, didn't they miss the deadline? What will happen to them next year? Severns: St. Cloud did send out some letters. There are other places that can be cut. Some administrators have been in denial. AFSCME and MSUAASF have different deadlines than we have. Adjuncts have different deadlines than probationary faculty. It varies from campus to campus. Morehead didn't hire any new faculty for a couple of years. They might not have to go through retrenchment. We are ahead of the curve in terms of the really painful cuts.

**2. Size of MnSCU**—Keating: For about ten years, I have heard legislators say that the MnSCU central office should take a smaller part of the overall budget. But MnSCU keeps growing. Are there more than 400 employees there now? Severns: I can't answer that specific question. My suspicion is the Legislature is going to be even more specific this year. The central office did some things that the Legislature didn't foresee. They might be under intense scrutiny this year. Mrja: I have contacted Sen. Kathy Sheran about that and she said several others have mentioned this to her. Brauer: The House Higher Ed Committee did pass some legislation that specified central office cuts but it was cut in the Senate. Severns: The central office is going to be under a microscope.

**3. MnSCU Breakup?**—Barb Carson: I have heard that the state universities are thinking about leaving MnSCU. Severns: There has been talk but I have heard no serious proposal regarding this. Keating: What about campus closures? Every once and awhile we hear this. Is Southwest safe? Severns: Their president takes great umbrage to that question even being raised. However, whoever the next governor is, is going to have some serious issues to address.

**4. Administration Assessment**—Bill Anderson: Last May we did some assessment of the administrators. Can you tell us how it was done and what was said to them? Severns: Yes and no. The way we did it was that the FA VP writes the questionnaire by talking to the incumbent about their current duties. The responses come in and then the FA President tabulates the results and talks to the administrator involved and his/her direct supervisor. Some people in the past have wanted the results to be made public. We haven't done that because we want the direct supervisor to have a candid discussion with the person they can hire and fire. We have had a very direct influence on this process. It needs to be serious and confidential. This last time we used Survey Monkey. There were some problems but I was able to share the results with the administrators. I will not share the results of the survey. Some of our Deans have greater challenges than others. Anderson: I'm not asking for results, but I have done surveys and have seen email addresses on Survey Monkey. Severns: No, that was not our case. We could not identify any responders. I am also chairing a state taskforce on electronic balloting. There is a security issue with Survey Monkey. There are competing programs that are better but they are much more expensive. Using paper and pencil isn't cheap either.

Severns: We are here to work for you to make the University a better place. If you have any questions, feel free to contact us.

Meeting adjourned at 4:33 p.m.

Paul J. Hustoles  
FA Recording Secretary