

FACULTY ASSOCIATION
SPRING GENERAL MEETING
Thursday, January 6, 2011
CSU 284 abc
UNAPPROVED NOTES

Attendance fluctuated throughout the meeting, hitting a peak of 35. [Note: Speakers who identified themselves have attributed comments. Others are not identified by name.]

FA President Severns called the meeting to order at 3:05 p.m.

1. Minutes of the General Meeting of August 17, 2010—James Grabowska/Barbara Keating moved to approve. Passed.

2. Faculty Association President's Report—Severns: This report is very similar to what we discussed in the Executive Meeting this morning.

a. The Iron Range Meeting—This is scheduling for tomorrow morning. We have a program up in the Iron Range. There were a number of questions raised by our Engineering programs. This Iron Range program is a degree from MSU but with non-MSU faculty. We were looking for some buy-in by someone here on campus. The meeting tomorrow will help to move us in that direction.

b. Campus Violence—We have been talking about both campus violence and student behavior. This morning we talked about something other than a task force that could put together some information. We might need to have a discussion about policies and procedures. Grabowska: The Great Place To Work Task Force is also looking at something that is related—putting bullying back on the table. This initiative will be campus wide. We will talk about strategies and approaches. Severns: The Executive Committee wants to have a broader campus discussion. We have a good one-page summary of procedures in an emergency. Mary Visser: What is the time frame? Grabowska: I'll find out.

c. Treasurer's Report—Severns: Lynnette Engeswick is going on sabbatical this term. Paul Hustoles has agreed to be our Interim Treasurer. We don't have any significant outstanding debts. We have about \$3,000 at present. The IFO has redesigned the budget formula. That will result in our local campus winding up with more money. Both MSU and St. Cloud has its own staff. The state IFO will help us and we should expect about \$3,000 more this year. However, they will not allow us to carry forward money. So we might want to get some new items (e.g., a scanner, a new copying machine, etc.). Our local budget is like the state budget. With a reduced number of faculty, we will be taking in less money in dues and, therefore, we will get less from the state next year. Question: What percentage of the faculty is full membership? Severns: I believe it is about 80%. This number of fair share goes up as the number of adjuncts go up.

d. Tuition Bubble—Severns: We have more money than we expected because we have more students than we had planned on. We need to use this money or lose it. We are looking at \$4-7 million dollars. The Administration has been very forthcoming about wanting input on how to spend it. But they have not been clear on procedures about how to allocate this. I asked VP Blackhurst for a meeting within the next two weeks so we can plan an agenda for a Budget/Planning Submeet very soon. Ellen Mrja: We are up this year 200 FYE. That is an extra \$2 million. We also had a great summer. Also, energy costs are very low. All of this was a happy circumstance. We should not think that faculty are the only ones with plans for this money. The President and every other bargaining unit will be making requests. Severns: This is one-time money. If we don't have a plan, we won't get anything. Mrja: This money will not go to hire new

faculty. It could go to retrain faculty that we have. Or it could be used for facilities or equipment upgrades. Severns: There are some faculty who don't have up-to-date computers. There has been a suggestion about a tunnel between this building and the library. Mrja: So faculty should start thinking. For example maybe we could make structural upgrades to Armstrong Hall. Bill Anderson: Historically the predictions around our enrollments have left a lot to be desired. How do we know that this is a bubble and that there won't be another bubble next year and the year after that? Maybe some positions could be saved. Severns: A good question. But we do know that the number of high school students is dropping. This year, we had both a higher yield and a better retention rate. Can we keep that up? I don't know. At least half of this money is based on these results. But we are not plugging this into the planning process. That is probably the reasonable approach.

e. Differential Tuition Task Force—This has not met yet but Queen Booker will convene the Task Force. We don't have the Administration representatives yet but if we call the meeting they will show up. Question: Is there some pressing issue here? Severns: We already have a few programs with differential tuition at the graduate level. We have done it in a haphazard approach with Extended Learning. But nothing at the undergrad level. We have never really talked about that here.

f. Athletics & Academics—This has been a difficult area for a number of years on our campus. It goes back to the idea that some of the assistant coaches teach classes. This has been, at times, problematic. We have a particular problem now because both Human Performance and Athletics have to cut their budgets. We are trying to put together a proposal with Academic Affairs that both sides can live with. This is something that we are working on.

g. Smart Transfer Plan—Donna Brauer (state Academic Affairs Coordinator)— The plan is a timeline for having course outlines posted on the institution's website. The purpose is to increase the transparency and ease with which students can see if courses will transfer. Unfortunately, the Associate Vice Chancellor in charge of this doesn't really understand how difficult this is going to be. The most recent meeting talked about how the courses that related to the Minnesota State Transfer Curriculum would be up by March. Most of this work is happening at the community colleges but they don't have the personnel to input the data. This has not received the same sense of urgency that the Students First initiative has received. The Single Search module is supposed to be ready to roll soon. You can see all the courses in the system that are equivalent to a particular course. The Graduate Planner is being piloted here. The student can make a tentative plan to graduate. The Single Payment module will not be ready soon. The Chancellor wanted all of this to be up and running by the end of June. We are moving forward with it but it is plodding along. Question: Is this in conjunction with Minnesota Online? Brauer: These are separate. Severns: They are trying to figure out the difference between the courses that are offered only online and those that are hybrids. Brauer: They are going to have new codes. When the student goes to register, there will be a box that tells the student whether the course is online, partially online, etc. They will have different code numbers. Severns: I think they should have a link to inquire about articulation agreements. Comment: We need to make sure that a program checks for prerequisites. We have students who want some classes to substitute for other classes. In some of our classes we have to be assessing our classes and we don't know if the students are taking the class from this campus or from others. The feedback might not be valid. Mrja: I object to posting my course syllabus online. Brauer: No, it is the course outline not the syllabus. There is a big difference. The outline is about learning outcomes. In some institutions, administrations have put syllabi in electronic form and that is very worrisome. We are working on a form that would limit the usage of this. This is your intellectual property. Comment: What about when you post it on D2L for your students? Brauer: Only the faculty member has access to the D2L site. The tech staff will not let anyone else access your site. Comment: Last year, we were told that the dean could give permission to someone else. Severns: No. That is grieveable.

Comment: Why are we not objecting to this? It seems to me that we have lost academic freedom. Brauer: Outlines belong to the institution. There could be a hundred variations within them. Outlines have to be informative but not too specific. All of the work that goes into the specifics is the intellectual property of the faculty member. MnSCU is working on a fact sheet regarding this. Greg Marg: Using outlines are useless to evaluate a course equivalency. Brauer: The Learning Outcomes are the critical element. There needs to be an emphasis on this.

h. Defined Contribution Plan—Severns: I am your Defined Contribution Plan representative. Ours had been TIAA-CREF. Do we want them to continue to be the record keeper? We also have “drift.” Some of the mutual funds you have been investing in, have now changed. We might make some changes to some of this.

i. Article 11 Section I—Newly promoted faculty get a salary equity review automatically. If you got a promotion last year, you are supposed to be evaluated this year with all others hired at that time. Some people are pretty close and some people aren’t. We have been working on it on campus, then we will send it to the state. For those full professors, this is the last chance for adjustment. All of us have five-year period reviews.

j. Department Visits—Last semester I tried to talk to some of the departments and to listen to what was going on. So if you want me to visit your department meeting I would be happy to listen or talk to you.

k. Negotiations Update—Donna Brauer (FA Negotiator): We’ve had three meetings so far. We are looking at the Delegate Resolutions from last year. Sometimes resolutions are contradictory to others. There are issues that have arisen from what Southwest is going through right now relating to rostering. The same things are happening at St. Cloud and Bemidji and we just learned that Metro is reorganizing, colleges are going away. We are working on a letter of understanding between MnSCU and IFO. There are some other things in the contract that need to be addressed. We have started working on language. We have had discussions about where we think the Chancellor’s team will be coming from. They have talked about intra-space bargaining. In that, you search for a win-win situation. That’s how we got the sabbatical issue resolved. At the beginning of next month, we will have training in this. Then we will compile a list of issues. This will not have anything to do with money. We save that for “positional bargaining.” Each side takes a position and then you haggle. We are not going to get to discussing specifics until March, possibly April. We know they are concerned about nine-month appointments. These are causing all kinds of problems. Some people are concerned that sabbaticals are going to be attacked. I don’t think that is going to be an issue. The thing that will make this more difficult is that we have a Republican controlled legislature. In the past, after we have negotiated, only once before has the Legislature actually changed something we negotiated. This year, that might happen. The chair of one committee has already said that she expects a 0/0 raise. So even if the Chancellor wants to give us a raise, there is concern that the Legislature would not pass it. A number of the folks on the Higher Ed Committee have not been unfavorable to us. We are trying to figure out what the climate is going to be. There is obviously not a lot of money. Usually that means we can strengthen our language.

3. Faculty Association Vice-President’s Report—Mary Visser: We started this summer helping faculty with issues. We are available to you. Call us directly. We have three grievances in process. One is at level three which is a wrongful dismissal. We have two for wrongful discipline. We have another one coming up that has to do with re-rostering. Pat Arseneault from IFO will be down on Monday. Let us know if you would like to talk with her. She’s excellent and I’m very confident in her abilities.

4. New Business/Discussion Items

a. Invitation to see the SBS Dean Candidates—Barbara Keating: We have 4 very good candidates coming to campus. The open sessions start next week. We are moving from searching to selling the university. We don't want anyone to turn us down, or to resign in two years! Severns: Also, Blom just sent out a second call for members for the search committee for extended learning. Let us know if you are interested.

b. IRAP Survey—This is sort of a survey. Should we, at the legislature, pursue trying to have the Defined Contribution Plan changed? This would result in a higher retirement later but a lower take home pay now. The reason this has come up, is that the TRA system has been enriched three times. But they have not changed the Defined Contribution Plan. Is our campus in favor of that as an idea or do we prefer leaving it alone? Question: Could it be a range? Severns: It has to be a specific amount. Bill Wagner: Given the influx of people in the legislature who are anti-government employee and anti-benefits, this might not be a good time to do this. Severns: Nobody really knows. Much of this is our own money. They might favor us having more control over our money. Karl Heise: Fringe Benefits are really money we earn. We need to get out of the mindset that this is something that we don't control. Severns: We know, but some legislators might not know this.

c. Contract ratification Could Be Difficult—Russ Stanton will give us an update report and I will make sure I get that out to you.

d. Chancellor's Search—They are in the process of searching. They have hired a search firm. Brauer: The committee has already made recommendations to the Board of Trustees. IFO President Don Larsson reported that his gut level feeling was that we could work with any of the remaining applicants. Severns: They will have another round of interviews.

e. Seniority Rosters: Let me reiterate that we currently have a grievance out of the College of Education and it touches closely on a grievance at Southwest State. Administration there thought they could take someone from one roster, put them on another and then get rid of the roster. Our issue might have to go to the state level. This has been a major issue on other campuses.

f. FA Recruitment—Barbara Carson: We need to do something about recruiting for the Faculty Association. Severns: It seems like we have very few people who seem to do all the work. Carson: The workload is increasing and faculty are getting cut and we have more students. Severns: We have cut back in staff and the faculty have to do more work, for example, in the labs. Keating: There has been a significant shift in the pressure for publishing so there is less time to serve on a committee. There are only so many hours in the day. Comment: When the Deans speak in promotion and tenure workshops, and give their tips, they recommend staying away from service so that you can do teaching and publications. If you are a Chair, and you haven't been to one of those meetings, you might want to go and listen to what is being said. Brauer: But where are all the folk that are tenured? They are not in this room. Comment: Maybe we could suggest that all these task forces could be done by existing submeets. Anderson: I have heard that we don't have money for research requests, but we have this bubble money. Visser: The Exec Committee has been very vocal about the bubble money and how it should be spent to better the faculty. I know that some of the money they have is because of the loss of faculty and we have been very vocal about getting some of this back. Severns: This is where the joint Planning/Budget Submeet can have a real voice.

Meeting adjourned at 4:44 p.m.

Paul J. Hustoles
FA Recording Secretary