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University of Minnesota, Morris
Morris, Minnesota
Campus Assembly Minutes

May 7, 1979

Ernest Kemble, Vice Chairperson of the Assembly, chaired the session in the absence of Provost Imholte.

Steve Granger reminded the faculty that the deadline for the academic progress requirement contract is May 14.

The Honors Case Commission report came before the Assembly as an item of information. Dr. Kemble reported as a constitutional amendment the action will require a two-thirds voting membership of the Assembly to pass. Dr. Kemble suggested that any possible amendments be submitted in writing to the Executive Committee before the next Assembly meeting. Kim Sykora introduced the item. He began with editorial corrections to the document and also a rebuttal to an article in the Morris Weekly that editorialized on the topic of the Honors Case Commission report. A request was made from the floor for an explanation of the committee's deliberations about alternative systems to the present proposal. Kim Sykora's response explained that the committee initially critically reviewed the present operating system and by early 1972 it was decided to revise the system in a major way, retaining strengths of the operating system. A working assumption of the committee as they reviewed surveys taken at UMM was to maintain academic integrity as a joint responsibility of faculty and students.

It was reported that the present system fails in so far as students do not "turn-in" cheaters. Remedial work with students who apparently depend upon cheating to pass a course was not discussed by the committee. The committee attacked the basic assumption of the present system that "students are basically honest and truthful..." as no longer an operating principle. The committee did not assume the role of "moral instructor" in this matter to devise ways to encourage or foster academic integrity. The charge of the group was explained as to investigate policy.

Clarification of faculty powers in reporting and responding to cheating was given as totally to the faculty's decision, i.e., from a no grade for the performance on which cheating was demonstrated to a no-record for the entire course in which cheating was demonstrated. The appeal process in the proposal may, it was noted, lead to questions concerning such faculty action. A more explicit statement about faculty rights and responsibility might be helpful to the intention of the proposal.

The implication that proctoring performances reduce or eliminate cheating was suggested to be misleading or perhaps false. Evidence to substantiate this implication was requested. The survey taken at UMM seemed to suggest to a 4 to 1 ratio that proctoring would reduce cheating.

The necessity to report each apparent violation was questioned as being too legalistic because it extends any resolution of matters of cheating beyond faculty and student. The committee felt that there should, however, be a means to ascertain repeated violations of academic integrity.

The general climate of cheating on campus was raised and interpreted as in a deplorable state and that the Assembly must determine its attitude toward cheating in order to make any system to deal with cheating workable. It was suggested that students be carefully and thoroughly instructed on the nature and operation of the honor system as similar systems are presented on other campuses. The committee did not inquire of other institutions on ways in which honor systems are introduced and administered. Bulletins of other colleges were consulted to gain information on their honor systems. It was reiterated that instruction in moral integrity itself be a total campus concern and a commitment to an honor code be the goal of all of the members of the campus community.

The amendment proposed to the By-Laws of the Constitution requires, it was noted, only a majority of the voting membership, not a two-thirds majority of voting members as was reported earlier. Discussion on the item ended as Dr. Kemble again requested possible amendments to the proposal be given in written form.

Acting Academic Dean, Bert Ahern, reported on the NCA Self-Study. However onerous the task, he urged disciplines to complete the NCA questionnaire. Campus NCA committees hope to complete rough draft documents based upon discipline reports this spring. During the summer the Assistant Provost will draft a document to which all can react to and amend next fall.

The minutes of the Assembly meeting of April 16, 1979, were approved by voice vote.

Mimi Frenier presented for action that the women's intercollegiate athletic program join the Northern Sun Conference. The motion passed by voice vote.

Before the 5:30 deadline Bert Ahern moved to extend consideration of items beyond the limit of the 5:45 deadline. The motion passed.

The Executive Committee presented its interpretation of its constitutional role as an item of information. The interpretation was made in response to a request to the Provost for such a clarification and articulation of the committee's role. No waves of general negative reaction stirred the surface of the Assembly. Concern was expressed specifically about the Executive Committee's seeming extension of its powers to possibly obstruct rather than facilitate legislative processing. The statement was claimed to be too vague to be informative and perhaps providing unconstitutional powers to the Executive Committee.

The Assembly adjourned at 6 p.m. after no definite motions came from the floor of the Assembly to provide formal reaction to the last item considered at this session.