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## Campus Assembly minutes 04/14/1986

Campus Assembly

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University of Minnesota, Morris  
Campus Assembly Meeting  
14 April 1986

The campus assembly met on Monday, April 14, at 4 p.m. in the science auditorium.

Imholte announced that only members of the assembly and members of committees directly involved in legislation before the assembly could vote.

I. The minutes of December 9, 1985 were approved.

II. Initial appointments to committees as shown on the agenda were approved as follows:

Scholastic Committee - Mohamad Al-Shofe  
Athletic Committee - Joe Borer  
Housing and Food Service Committee (Freshman Academic Council  
President's position) - Bill Mettler  
International Program Committee - Blane Dahl  
Teacher Education Committee - Mary Kittok

III. The following changes in committee assignments were given for information:

Campus Resources & Planning Committee - Joyce Lacey for Doug Rollins  
Curriculum Committee - Jennifer Jesseph for Christine Myers-Woodcock  
Consultative Committee - Karen Hansen for Ann Rois  
Activities Fee Review Committee - Curt Mateer, Chairperson;  
Veronica Burt; J. Patrick Policape; Aleisha Fuller; Beatrice Sanchez

IV. The curricular proposal in physics was approved.

V. For Action from the Faculty Development Committee. Two proposals for changes in teaching evaluation at UMM

Jean Richards, Chair of the Faculty Development Committee presented some introductory remarks on the committee's proposals for changes in teaching evaluation at UMM. Imholte asked if the committee wished for a vote on the entire document, or votes on the two proposals separately. Richards said it was the committee's intention to call for a vote on each proposal separately.

Granger thought there was sufficient identifying information in questions 8 and 9 on Attachment #3 to cause a problem with anonymity. Richards agreed that was a problem, but noted that if a student had this concern, that student could simply avoid answering those questions and/or supply a written response to

the division chair. Granger wondered why the two questions were included. Richards said the committee felt that the correlation of information gained would be worth the risk.

Straw asked how correlations could be made when the pages are separate? Richards replied that as the form stood now, there was no need to separate them. Ron Kubik suggested an amendment to add comments on the back of Attachment #2. He also thought Granger's concern about anonymity was a relevant one. Cotter said the committee had wanted to avoid comments on the back of Attachment #2 because it wanted that section to have statistical validity and comments do not provide that. Ahern said it might be better to move questions 7, 8, & 9 on Attachment #2 to Attachment #3. Cotter said that if this was a real concern those questions could be moved, but he would prefer to keep them where they were. Richards reiterated that if a student was concerned about anonymity, the student could use other means to convey their evaluations.

May wondered how much of a concern this was for students. A student replied that if one was going to take other courses from the instructor, negative comments could be held against the student in subsequent classes. May noted that this would be a serious violation on the part of the instructor and that students should have some recourse for this kind of behavior.

Paulson asked the purpose for adding the student information material to the form. Richards said it was done in an effort to get more information, i.e., gathering aggregate data on what kinds of students answer which way. He said this was valuable information. Paulson asked those who advocated moving the student information from the evaluative form to the informative one whether that would help? Richards indicated that the problem would exist whether the information was moved or not. Paulson thought that sort of information would be vitally important to the teacher.

Guyotte wondered why the questions needed to be included at all. He noted the following:

- UMM can compile data on courses - why do the students have to do it?
- in regard to question 8, some courses are primarily designed for a certain purpose

Cotter said that feedback from seniors is different than that from freshmen. Littlefield was in favor of keeping the questions. She said that comments from students who are doing well in class carry more weight. In reference to Guyotte's question, Richards noted that UMM has had this information for years, but hasn't used it. Now it will be more readily available. Guyotte commented that perhaps the reason it hasn't been used is that it is not needed.

Olson commented on Guyotte's statement and said that the data is not always available. He said he had never seen a figure much more than 90% when looking at the percent of class members present when filling out evaluation forms. There is no way to tell which 10% is missing. He said that he has been frustrated when trying to interpret numerical printouts.

Carver spoke to Attachment #3. He saw this form as being much clearer, more specific, and more meaningful. He asked why there needed to be two separate forms and suggested going with the more useful one. He was against eliminating room for open-ended comments and said that comments are the only thing that make numerical information useful. He also thought that having two questions which compare courses with other courses was overkill.

Richards noted that questions 2 and 6 on Attachment #2 are global. He said that question 6 is the only question that's really valid. A high score shows that one is a "better" teacher. He felt that most faculty do not believe in numerical data.

Ahern wondered if his perception (following) of the discussion was accurate:

- committee believes that global questions are best for evaluative purposes
- while global questions are useful, committee now wants to add diagnostic questions
- committee recommends keeping global questions for evaluation purposes, but wants to give faculty opportunity to stick in additional data
- there is a legitimate concern about anonymity

Ahern said he would like to see the student information shifted to the diagnostic section unless the administrators feel they would attempt to use this data for institutional purposes.

Richards indicated that Ahern's summary was correct. He felt that student information should be for faculty. He asked if administrators would use it? Olson replied that he would. He thought the information would be extremely helpful to administrators, especially in large and/or 1000 level courses. It would encourage dialogue between the division chair and the faculty member. Underwood said that in addition to the student information, he also found the comments useful. Paulson agreed and said the student information questions would be useful in the evaluative section for comparison purposes. He also said the open-ended comments would be very helpful in the evaluative section. Richards stated that the committee had voted against including a section for comments on Attachment #2.

Cotter said that Attachment #2 really provided data for tenure decisions. The document presently being used does not provide a valid cross section. Lemelle asked how valid the proposed form is? He said that independent variables might affect the outcome. Cotter said that the committee had tried to reduce the number of variables. He went on to say that he thought this form should be limited to numbers and not include comments. Nellis pointed out that nothing on the form said that comments cannot be added if one wishes to do so.

Purdy asked for elaboration on the report from the outside consultant. Richards replied that the consultant had provided the committee with suggested global, evaluative questions that were about the same as the ones it already had. He also said that he thought comments were extremely valid.

E. Klinger said that he knew comments were valid, but wondered if they were useful. Richards indicated that he thought they were the most useful thing in the whole process.

Paulson said one possibility was to hand out two sheets for comments. He thought, however, that it would be dangerous to have two places to comment and that an area for comments should be available on the most easily accessible one. Cumber commented that students would probably not write comments in both places.

Paulson moved to have a section for comments included on the evaluative form (Attachment #2) in the student information section. Richards seconded the motion. Ordway disagreed with the suggestion. She said that comments are for the instructor and therefore should be on the informative form (Attachment #3). She felt the informative section was more important than the evaluative one because there is more validity in that section, and if necessary, that page should come first. Paulson said that many students write comments so evaluators will see them and they may not write them if they think only the instructors will see them. A student agreed saying that students think it is important to have an opportunity to make comments to division chairs.

Cotter noted that many students don't use the comment section. Another student agreed saying that many times freshmen aren't apt to write comments. The student went on to say that students who do write comments want them seen by administrators and that question 7 on Attachment #2 will give the comments more quality. Cumber disagreed with the statement that freshmen aren't apt to write comments. Kubik said the whole form needs to be explained to students and noted that some students use it as the only way to convey their feelings to administrators. Kissock agreed that it was important to include a comments section on Attachment #2 explaining that no one was required to answer any of the questions if they didn't want to.

Lemelle also agreed on having a comment section, and on a lighter note, suggested that perhaps after the grades are in, the instructors should send the comments to the students' parents.

Blane Dahl said that the instructors do not always allow adequate time for students to complete the evaluation forms. Littlefield said that since the evaluative section comes first, the instructor would only be hurting him/herself by not allowing the student sufficient time to complete the rest of the forms. She said that it would take 10-12 minutes to complete the forms. D. Braithwaite thought it would be good to leave the choice up to the students as to whom they want to address their comments - faculty or administrators. She said that many students don't know how these evaluation results are used. Cumber explained that this was the reason the proposal of the committee was more structured.

May wondered if the students couldn't take the forms out overnight to complete. Richards explained that policy dictated the forms must be returned to the division office by the end of class time, and if the concern was that not enough time was available for students to write comments, they could write separate communications to the division chairs anytime they wished. Purdy agreed and said that there were other avenues available for students to be heard.

Peterson said he was against the evaluation proposal, noting that when the process began in the late 1960s, it was an evaluation of the course. Now it is an evaluation of the teacher. Eidem pointed out that students may at times write comments so that division chairs will know what's going on in classes. Ahern stated that if the amendment was to add an area of comments only if it was global, he would be in favor of it.

Imholte asked for alternate debate, pro and con, on the amendment to add a section for comments on Attachment #2 in the student information section. Some of the pros and cons given were:

Pros:

- Students need the outlet.
- If many students make the same comments there is validity to them.
- If a comment section isn't on the back of Attachment #2 (evaluative section for administrators), there may be no comments at all.

Cons:

- Other outlets exist for the students to express themselves.
- A comment section is more destructive to morale.

- The idea of another outlet is disturbing.
- Normally only those who have problems with the class/and or instructor write comments.
- One reason for comments on the informative section is to remove the subjective from the evaluative section.

The question was called and Imholte explained that those who voted in favor of it supported the inclusion of written comments on the back of Attachment #2. Those voting against the amendment supported no change in the proposal. The amendment to have a section for comments included on the evaluative form (Attachment #2) in the student information section carried with 37 in favor, 26 opposed, and 3 abstentions.

Discussion now turned to Proposal 1 as amended. Straw called attention to the first two questions on Attachment #2. He pointed out that if students don't like the instructor, they won't like the course and vice versa. Cotter wondered if Straw wanted to change the name of the form. Straw suggested taking out the first two questions so as to make it an evaluation of teaching and not of the course itself.

Paulson thought it would be interesting to know whether or not the evaluation of the instructor runs ahead or behind the evaluation of the course. He suggested changing questions 1 and 6. Richards said again that question 6 is the main question. Straw suggested changing the names of the forms to include Section 1 as the evaluation of courses and Section 2 as the evaluation of teaching. Farrell thought there would be some value in separating the two, although he noted that the instructor has input on how the course functions.

Kissock was concerned with the number of important questions raised, and said that in view of them, he proposed tabling the proposal and sending it back to the committee. Littlefield said that she didn't believe the committee could address all the concerns and get back to the assembly in a reasonable length of time. Guyotte said he was against tabling and suggested proceeding with the discussion. Blake pointed out that if the proposal was tabled without a future time set for it to be considered, the motion would be dead. E. Klinger said that the assembly had never passed a teaching evaluation form; the first one had come about because of Senate legislation. He noted that all these ideas had been debated before and suggested that the assembly now vote it up or down. Imholte indicated that the present form had been approved by the assembly. Cotter said that although the new form may have some problems, is the present form doing any good? Paulson asked if a date could be added to the tabling motion? The answer was no.

The question was called and the motion to table Proposal 1 as amended failed.

Imholte announced that the assembly would adjourn at 5:45 p.m. unless there was a motion to continue.

Van Alstine offered the following as a friendly amendment:

- on Attachment #2, move questions 1 and 2 to the bottom after questions 5 and 6, and then renumber them all
- insert subheading of "Insturctor" over questions 1, 2, 3, and 4
- insert subheading of "Course" over questions 5 and 6
- indicate that comments could be made on the back of Attachment #2
- leave Attachment #3 as it is leaving room for comments on the back

Richards agreed and moved to extend the adjournment time to 6:15 p.m. Agreed.

Rodriguez said he would like to see a mandatory length of time for students to complete the forms to ensure their reliability. Littlefield said the committee had indicated that a time of 10-12 minutes would be necessary to complete the forms, but it was up to the instructors.

Ahern said that because there was sufficient concern about this matter, he would consider a mandate that the evaluations be done at the beginning of the class period. Blane Dahl asked if the instructor could announce ahead of time when the evaluations would be done. Paulson remarked that if students didn't care enough about the class to be there, they would then lose the benefits of the course. He went on to say that there was something frightening about mandating and pointed out that people must have faith in the faculty. Littlefield agreed and said to impose a mandate would violate the freedom of faculty members.

Eidem wondered if a student who could not be present on the day of the evaluation could fill the form out at another time. Farrell said that would be a great inconvenience for the offices. Van Alstine asked if procedure was a part of Proposal 1. The answer was no and a vote on Proposal 1 was called. Proposal 1 to change the teaching evaluation form, as amended, was passed.

Richards outlined Proposal 2 for a change in the frequency of use of student opinion forms:

- tenured faculty would have two courses per year evaluated
- non-tenured faculty would have all courses evaluated
- UMM would be in compliance with all-University policy
- tenured faculty would be free to try out new teaching strategies without fear of low evaluations
- fewer evaluations would allow students to see their input as more important



Lemelle asked why the committee proposed to distinguish between tenure and tenure-track faculty? Richards indicated that more information was necessary for faculty on tenure-track. Van Alstine didn't feel it was necessary to separate the two. St. Claire thought it would present a morale problem. Cumber said that when evaluations are done so often, the students burnout. This is one way to alleviate that problem. Cotter said that evaluations are compared with other courses the same size. If the evaluations for tenured faculty are reduced, that information is not as useful. Kissock agreed with Val Alstine and Cotter.

Straw asked if Proposal #2 was not passed, would every course be evaluated every quarter? The answer was yes, it would continue the same as it is now. Ahern thought the only legitimate reason to reduce the number of evaluations would be the burnout issue. If this turns out to be a problem with the new questionnaire, then the number could be reduced.

Underwood questioned some of the wording of the proposal. On page 4, #4 says "UMM would be in compliance with University policy." On page 2, under New Frequency Requirements, it says, "will move UMM toward compliance with University policy." Richards said there could be too much compliance. Tenured faculty are afraid to try new things. Littlefield indicated that non-tenured faculty would like the same benefit as Richards proposes for tenured faculty.

Kuntz said that faculty should keep in mind that students are not always negative toward new things. Kubik agreed and said he couldn't understand why evaluations on a quarterly basis should be a problem for tenured faculty, and encouraged them to try new things. Farrell pointed out that in trying new things, it was important to distinguish between evaluation of faculty and evaluation of courses.

The question was called on whether to vote on Proposal 2. The motion carried.

A vote was taken on Proposal 2 to change the frequency of use of student opinion forms. The proposal failed.

#### VI. Admissions Requirement and "Regular Student" Status for Enrollment Options Act Students

Togean, Chair of the Scholastic Committee, opened with the following remarks:

- proposal attempts to recognize that some EOA students are like other freshmen; some are not
- EOA students come for different reasons; policy reflects these factors

- EOA students now are treated differently than other freshmen
- important to have liaison with high schools
- interim policy has been successful, but failed to recognize some of above factors

Gremmels asked if the Scholastic Committee had consulted with Latterell about the proposal coming from the advising council. Togeas said that Latterell had informed him that a proposal was forthcoming. Gremmels said he would like to see the proposal sent to the Council on Academic Advising for their recommendation before the assembly votes on it. He had reservations about the recommendation for CEE to handle the advising. Togeas said it was important to realize that the liaison between advisers and the high school would be more efficient if handled by a small group in the same unit. If EOA students are distributed among all faculty for advising purposes, it would be a problem. Gremmels noted that he was not concerned with efficiency or liaison, just with what sort of advising the students would get. Granger said that the responsibility for advising in CEE lies with Karla Klinger and Tom McRoberts. He noted that the amount of paperwork for these students is tremendous and he didn't feel that the faculty would be able to handle it.

Ahern asked about the recent legislation which, as he understood it, meant that EOA students cannot take credit to apply for both high school and college. Granger was unsure of what was actually passed.

Straw said that he supported Gremmels. He felt that advising should be kept with the faculty and recommended that perhaps CEE could handle the record keeping part of it. Farrell agreed, saying that one was an administrative function and the other a scholastic one. Straw supported the idea of sending the proposal to the Council on Academic Advising.

The proposal on Admission Requirements and Regular Student Status for Enrollment Options Act Students was approved.

The meeting adjourned at 6:10 p.m.

Submitted by Pat Tanner