

11-23-2010

## Consultative minutes 11/23/2010

Consultative Committee

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### Recommended Citation

Consultative Committee, "Consultative minutes 11/23/2010" (2010). *Consultative Committee*. 103.  
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**Consultative Committee  
November 23, 2010**

*Present: Nancy Carpenter, Zak Forde, Manjari Govada, Paula O'Loughlin, Sharon Van Eps, Laura Thielke, Naomi Wente, and Jen Zych Herrmann.*

*Guest:*

*Chancellor Jacquie Johnson*

*RE: Carbon College and Blue Ribbon Task Force – next steps*

I. Carbon College

Chancellor Johnson presented the concept of UMM creating a Carbon College. This would not be a physical college but rather a conceptual college that would capture and capitalize on the renewable energy activities and opportunities at UMM. These opportunities could be credit-bearing or non-credit bearing.

Carbon College would fall under our college's outreach mission but would also provide educational opportunities for our students, staff and faculty. Examples would include the Carbon 101 course that will be offered in January 2011, other workshops, NSE, IRE, or perhaps even an intensive summer session.

This initiative would be funded through private donations as well as funds secured through the standard budgetary process.

The following questions were raised by members of the committee:

1) *Organizationally, where would the Carbon College belong?*

Members of the committee thought that in the past this kind of program would have been housed in Continuing Education but under the new organizational structure the Center for Small Towns or the Office of Community Engagement make sense.

2) *Who would be the organizer and champion of this initiative? It should be tied into the campus organizational structure.*

One member wondered how leadership of the Carbon College would fit into existing workloads. Chancellor Johnson said that her initial thought is that we might need to make the investment in a position to lead this program, providing that there is a strong business plan and an expectation for revenue generation. Other options include some rethinking of organizational structures and existing positions or finding a way to provide administrative support to individuals who would oversee Carbon College in addition to other job responsibilities. Nothing is definite at this point and more consultation is necessary, especially with the involved parties.

Potential concerns raised by members of the committee included:

1) Carbon College may look like a reconstruction of Continuing Education. It is understood that this is not the intent but this should be clear.

2) Its widely agreed that it is good to consult with the parties that may be involved with Carbon College if it comes to fruition but this may result in hard feelings for others on campus who didn't get to do the same when their units were reconfigured.

Other comments:

-If the Center for Small Towns was to oversee the Carbon College perhaps it should be renamed to something like the Center for Sustainable Communities to be more representative

-The capital to navigate UMM and the University of Minnesota will be an important attribute of the person overseeing the initiative.

-It is wise to capture what already exists at UMM and take advantage of our niche. Other colleges are closing in on our territory and it would be a shame to be eclipsed by another school or program who doesn't have the depth and experience of UMM.

Jacquie's next step is to go back to the involved parties and get their feedback on how to proceed. She plans to bring this proposal to Campus Assembly in Spring 2011. An ambitious goal would be to get something going in Spring 2011 with perhaps a summer course in 2011. Course development funds could come from Curriculum Committee EDP funds or mini grant funds from John Foley's office. As much as possible there would be an effort to tie into other U of M opportunities, including co-teaching of courses.

## II. Blue Ribbon Task Force – Acting on Task Force Recommendations

The Blue Ribbon Task Force has done their work and has put forth a set of action plans. These plans now need to be put into effect and the task force is seeking Consultative Committee input regarding the recommendation to examine the role of e-learning on campus. The campus has never made a formal decision about the role e-learning should play on campus and the Task Force would like to see the campus be educated about this area so we can make an informed decision. Questions to be considered could include:

1) Audience - are online courses for our current students, students who are away from campus because of study abroad or personal reasons, or Post-Secondary Enrollment Option (PSEO) students?

2. Resources – could this be a source of revenue or a drain on resources? The Financing the Future reports should be consulted.

It was thought that Consultative could work with the Dean's Office to take on this task via a 2-step process:

1) Consultative could work with the Dean's Office, informed campus members (for example, previous GenEdWeb instructors) and off-campus individuals (this could be individuals such as outside experts or colleagues at the Twin Cities campus). The goal would be to identify key questions/policy issues surrounding e-learning.

2) After the key questions are identified they are to be compiled and shared with the Dean and others so that methods could be devised to examine or address the questions or concerns.

The challenge is how to have or organize such a complicated question. The goal is to provide the campus community with enough information to have an informed, objective conversation. At the end of the day it could be determined that e-learning suits us well and provides opportunity for our campus. It could also be determined that e-learning is not appropriate for our campus, allowing use to reinvest in other priorities. There was concern that we may not have the expertise on campus to have an informed conversation. Jacquie suggested a contact, Paul Bauers who consults in this area and could help facilitate our understanding and future conversation and to develop a business model. Some of the membership were concerned about how a consultant may be perceived, as if the decision has already been made to move forward with e-learning. That is not the Chancellor's intent. Rather, she sees it as a way for us to understand all of our possibilities and to make a well-informed decision.

Consultative's conversation included an endorsement of the importance of a business model and some acknowledgment that this is a conversation that should have happened ten years ago and it is long overdue. The committee did not see their role as leading the educational process but rather advising on and bringing together the appropriate people to do so. Additionally we can provide feedback from our constituencies and guidance on issues to address throughout the process.

Respectfully submitted by Jennifer Zych Herrmann