

The minutes of the February 7, 1994 Senate Assembly meeting were approved on March 21, 1994.

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
SENATE ASSEMBLY MEETING
MINUTES OF 7 FEBRUARY 1994

ATTENDANCE

Present: Awkward, Beam, Bike, Blair, Brandle, Brewer, Brown, Cameron, Canine, Christiansen, Coward, D'Alecy, DeCamp, Eggertsen, Eklund, Elta, England, Ensminger, Fox, Gidley, Griffin, Gull, Irani, Kaplan, Kelley, Kennedy, V. Lee, Lomax, Lykes, Moore, Mutschler, Myers, Princen, Raymond, Rodriguez-Hornedo, Rush, Saunders, Schteingart, Shirley, Simms, Sisson, Stensones, Tinkle, Williams; Olson, Thorson, Heskett.

Absent: Birge, Blinder, Brusati, Bryant, Chiego, Cowan, Driscoll, Frey, Greene, Katehi, Kunkel, Lawson, Levine, Loup, Maloy, Marich, McNamara, Mukasa, Nairn, Nostrant, Nowak, Scheppele, Silverstein, Smith, Stein, Tremper, Warner, Whitehouse, Woo; MacAdam.

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES OF JANUARY 24, 1994

The minutes were approved as submitted.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Griffin urged Assembly members to notify staff in the Faculty Senate Office about whether they will be attending the retreat with Executive Committee members on March 2. He reminded members about the Davis-Markert-Nickerson lecture on March 21. Griffin reported that Jean Loup, Assistant to the Dean of the University Library for M-Quality and Strategic Planning and Librarian, University Library, had been elected to serve as SACUA chair during the next academic year and he reviewed her extensive experience in faculty governance. Beam, on behalf of the Librarians, offered Loup their congratulations and support.

CANDIDATES FOR ELECTION TO SACUA

Griffin explained that members need to be elected to fill three upcoming vacancies on SACUA. David Blair (Business Administration), Mark DeCamp (UM-Dearborn), Linda Katehi (Engineering), Charles Kelsey (Dentistry), and Ronald Lomax (Engineering) have agreed to run for election. Brewer nominated Alfredo Montalvo (Art); Princen nominated Charles Olson (Natural Resources and Environment); and Moore nominated Thomas Dunn (Chemistry, LSA). The nominations were closed. The election will take place on March 21.

TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT

Robert Kahn, Professor Emeritus of Psychology and Health Services Management and Policy, described the history of UM's involvement in TQM, and the need for the University to increase productivity without increasing resources. He explained that W. E. Deming developed many of his theories from information in two research domains: statistical quality control and behavioral science. Statistical quality control was useful in distinguishing between problems generated by individuals and those generated by systemic organizational characteristics. He noted that solutions to problems from either source needed to come from the people involved in the work. Behavioral science was useful in his understandings of the importance of work groups, of the advantages of sharing power, of the interdependence of individuals throughout the system, and of the transformation of organizational culture in a way that also improved the working lives of the individuals involved. Kahn emphasized that TQM should be initiated in those units that are ready to adopt it, that formal leaders must commit to ongoing effort, that the work itself will change, and that there is a need for systematic evaluation of the program.

Kaplan asked how productivity was measured in an academic setting. Kahn replied that TQM addresses the quality, not the quantity, of service and noted that gains in quality often are accompanied by gains in productivity.

Eklund asked about UM experiences with TQM. Robert Holmes (Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs and Executive Advisor for M-Quality) cited two examples in the University Hospitals: a dramatic decrease in waiting time for admissions and improved scheduling of the operating rooms.

Shirley asked how statistical quality control applies to education in arts. Kahn responded that faculty members currently evaluate students, and that statistical quality control was only one basis of TQM and that it couldn't be applied uniformly.

EVALUATION OF DEANS

Griffin related the principles of TQM to the evaluation of deans. He noted especially the involvement of individuals involved (faculty members) and the desire to acquire accurate and adequate data upon which to base decisions. He explained that SACUA proposed distributing questionnaires to the faculty in the five selected units during mid-March, thus allowing units adequate time to develop unit-specific questions to be included. Moore noted that SACUA had unanimously endorsed this plan of action.

Charles Garvin (Professor of Social Work), chair of the Academic Affairs Committee, recognized D'Alecy's contributions in preparing the questionnaire, and noted two important features: that the Unit Review Coordinators can add up to five questions that are unit-specific, and that each dean can include an introductory statement. At Griffin's request, he reviewed the plans for handling the data collected: it will be sent to CRLT or a similar organization for tabulation, a report of the distribution of responses to each item will be sent to the faculty of that unit, and narrative comments will be sent only to the dean. The Academic Affairs Committee will be the only other group that receives raw data; they will generate a short qualitative report to SACUA and Senate Assembly.

Raymond asked if written comments would be included in AAC's report; Garvin replied that the dean would be the only person to see the narrative comments.

Shirley suggested that the fewer people handling the narrative comments, the better. He recommended keeping the data entirely within the unit by having the Unit Review Coordinators separate the narrative comments from the questionnaires. D'Alecy replied that staff support from the Faculty Senate Office might be needed for large units.

Kennedy asked about implications of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). Griffin explained that he had received two different answers: the General Counsel had advised that all material should be considered accessible via FOIA, while Ted St. Antoine (Professor of Law) had indicated that the materials would not be subject to FOIA because they were advisory in nature. Kennedy asked about minimum required response rates for statistical significance. Garvin replied that AAC had not taken a stand on the percentage of responses required. Kennedy asked why consistency across units was deemed important if the goal was simply to provide feedback to deans from within their units. Garvin replied that faculty members and deans could use the data to better understand their units. Kennedy asked why units couldn't design their own questionnaires. Garvin explained that this approach had been considered and rejected by AAC.

Sisson commented that the proposed process was more of a monologue than a dialogue, with all of the communication going from the faculty to the dean. DeCamp suggested an editorial change; Garvin asked that such comments be directed to AAC.

V. Lee asked whether this would be used as part of the formal evaluations of deans by the Provost. Garvin indicated that AAC was not concerned about this, that their goal was to improve communication between deans and their faculties. V. Lee Asked why an evaluation would be performed if a dean were leaving; Garvin responded that the evaluation would still be worth doing in order to learn about the unit.

Fox asked why the proposed AAC reports to SACUA and Assembly were necessary since they might reduce the level of candor with which faculty members responded. Garvin explained that AAC needed to review the results to identify campus-wide issues and to assess the utility of the instrument. D'Alecy indicated that the AAC report would be a general narrative, and that there are additional ways that faculty can communicate with their deans if they don't feel that they can be as candid as they would like to be with this particular process.

Kelly recommended that a minimum required response rate be established before proceeding, and questioned the utility of this instrument for a unit as large as LSA. Garvin replied that AAC does not want to set a response threshold, but that individual units could do so.

Tinkle suggested that this was not the best way to promote dialogue, that it would be extremely difficult to compare deans across campus, that it will be hard to get informed responses from a unit as large as LSA, and that the units need to have greater flexibility in modifying the questionnaire. England questioned how the responses would be kept confidential. Bike recommended a minimum required response rate. Shirley asked if the units could prevent information from going to AAC; Garvin repeated his earlier assessment of AAC's need to review the data.

Rush made an Moore seconded a motion that the Senate Assembly endorse the action of AAC thus far and instruct AAC to proceed with the process as currently proposed.

Several Assembly members reiterated concerns about the degree of flexibility that units would have in modifying the questionnaire, FOIA, and AAC's report to SACUA and Assembly. Griffin repeated the contradictory FOIA opinions. Fox recommended hiring counsel and suggested that faculty members should include their signatures with comments. Numerous members opposed these suggestions and urged that the proposed process be implemented. Schteingart moved that the motion be tabled; there was no second. At Ensminger's request, it was confirmed that a quorum was present. The motion passed by a vote of 26-11.

FLEXIBLE BENEFITS

Griffin called attention to a letter from the President's Advisory Commission on Women's Issues urging that adoption of a flexible benefits plan be deferred and noted that he had received several e-mail messages from Assembly members questioning whether adequate information was available to inform a decision about adopting a plan.

Brown made and Brewer seconded a motion,

"The Senate assembly recommends that implementation of flexible benefits be deferred until the following issues can be resolved:

- 1) development of incentives to participate in benefits (beyond health insurance) -- currently there are none,
- 2) development of a method to avoid adverse selection that results from the lack of incentives,

- 3) development of a method to ensure that the contribution of the university will remain at a level to ensure no loss in the quality of the benefits. The revised proposal should be returned to the Senate Assembly for reconsideration."

Brown quickly summarized his concerns about the current plan, emphasizing that all benefits beyond health insurance will be real-dollar costs to employees, that life insurance premium costs will increase by approximately 50%, that individuals will be encouraged to migrate to less expensive health care plans which will result in greater savings for the University than for the individuals, and that there is no assurance that the University contributions will be maintained. He predicted that, if adopted, the current proposal will ultimately destroy University employee benefits. Because of time restrictions, Griffin asked for opposing comments only; there were none. The motion passed unanimously.

OLD AND NEW BUSINESS

There was no old or new business.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00.

Submitted by,

Jayne Thorson
Secretary pro tempore

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