

**Minutes of the Senate
February 14, 2005**

Present: Senators Anton, Bartanen (Academic Vice President), Beardsley (Senate Chair), Cunningham (Student Senator), DeMarais, Edgoose, Foster, Haltom, Holland, Maxwell, Orlin, Tinsley, Wimberger

1) Call to Order: by Chair Beardsley at 4:05pm.

2) Approval of Minutes: The minutes for January 31st were approved with no abstentions.

3) Chair's Report: None was submitted.

4) Special Orders

Orlin noted the Curriculum Committee vote to allow freshmen to transfer into sections set aside for transfer students on an as-space-available basis and with instructor permission and after successfully petitioning the ASC. He wondered whether faculty might want to rethink that vote.

Beardsley noted that the vote in the CC was 3 for, 3 against, with 4 abstentions and with the chair breaking the tie.

Haltom suggested we send this decision back to the CC as they know more about this than we do, but we could ask if this is as close to a majority as they can get. This caused Tinsley to ask whether the vote count should be a reason for sending it back to committee, when we don't have this vote information on every committee vote. Orlin reiterated his main concern was that transfer students have little flexibility while freshmen have more. He urged we ask them to have a broader discussion on the needs of transfer students.

Foster asked a procedural question, asking whether we have time to revisit this issue in a later Senate meeting. Beardsley answered that now we had opened the issue we meet the time requirement.

Haltom: Move to recommit the motion "freshmen may enroll in transfer sections on an as-space-available basis only with instructor permission and after successful petition to the ASC" to the Curriculum Committee with a request

a) for their reconsideration when more members are present and voting, and

b) consideration whether transfer students are to enroll in seminars designated for freshmen.

MSP with 1 abstention.

Formatted: Indent: Left: 0", Hanging: 0.25"

Formatted: Font: Bold

Deleted: The meeting was called to order

Formatted: Bullets and Numbering

Formatted: Font: Bold

Deleted: ¶

Deleted: ¶

Formatted: Indent: Left: 0", Numbered + Level: 1 + Numbering Style: 1, 2, 3, ... + Start at: 1 + Alignment: Left + Aligned at: 0.25" + Tab after: 0.5" + Indent at: 0.5", Tab stops: 0.25", List tab + Not at 0.5"

Formatted: Bullets and Numbering

Deleted: ¶

Formatted: Indent: Left: 0"

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted

Formatted: Bullets and Numbering

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted

Formatted: Bullets and Numbering

Formatted: Indent: Left: 0.25"

Formatted: Bullets and Numbering

Formatted: Font: Bold

Deleted: ¶

Formatted: Font: Not Bold

Formatted: Bullets and Numbering

Deleted: <#>Chair's Report¶

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted: Font: Not Bold

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted: Font: Not Bold

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted

Formatted: Bullets and Numbering

Formatted: Indent: Hanging: 0.5"

Formatted: Indent: Left: 0.25"

Formatted: Right: 0.25"

5) Continued Discussion of Teaching Evaluations.

Holland and Orlin raised three “philosophical issues” relating to teaching evaluations for the Senate to discuss:

i) Currently evaluations can be conducted as early as week 10. Is this too early?

Anton quoted Malcolm Gladwell’s *Blink* to note that student evaluations of an instructor informed by no more than a 10 second video have a 0.9 correlation with final evaluations. Thus, he reasoned, the timing of evaluations is not so important. Foster noted that students don’t have to do their evaluations early. Cunningham opined that the 10 week point might avoid inaccuracies caused by the stress of finals week. Haltom noted that, since no significant work might be graded by week 10, early evaluations might allow instructors to inflate grades early in the semester and then “bring down the hammer.” Foster asked whether the FAC and colleagues would not notice this. Beardsley thought they would.

ii) Should evaluations intended for tenure and promotion decisions be separated from feedback from students on how the course could be improved?

Foster noted that we currently attempt to meet both goals at once. Holland suggested we redesign the forms for tenure and promotion purposes only. Orlin added that faculty could either do their own feedback forms or the official forms could have a separate feedback section that went directly to the instructor after grades were in, and which would not be read in the evaluation process. Beardsley noted that the line between these two purposes might not be clear and noted that the question “Do these texts work?” is informative to both functions. Bartanen asked whether there was any evidence of student confusion. Cunningham responded that, in an informal discussion of this issue in the ASUPS Senate, there was confusion on just this issue.

iii) Should the forms be worded in statements about what the instructor did or what the student did in the instructor’s class?

Beardsley asked whether these different wordings affected outcomes. Anton replied that they do. Orlin asked which wording best meets our needs, and Anton suggested that consultants could best advise us as how to move forward. Holland noted that the Senate wanted to look at the philosophical issues at stake, but Foster suggested the Senate might not be well placed to decide.

The discussion then turned to broader issues relating to the evaluations. Tinsley asked what the numbers mean on the evaluation forms and suggested they be removed. He noted that grades tend to be either 6s or 1s. Orlin asked whether we should “crunch the numbers” to find means and spread. Bartanen remarked that Kansas State does work on this, but Maxwell noted that we looked at this question 20 years ago. Foster passed around information on the SEEO norm-based evaluation that has numeric evaluations and space for feedback.

Orlin noted the need for the forms to recognize different styles of teaching – are all great teachers “enthusiastic?” He noted that at Macalester College there are no in-class evaluations. They send out forms (all text, no numbers) asking first what makes

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted

Formatted: Bullets and Numbering

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted: Indent: Left: 0.25"

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted

Formatted: Bullets and Numbering

Formatted: Indent: Left: 0.5"

Formatted: Font: Italic

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted

Formatted: Bullets and Numbering

Formatted: Indent: Left: 0.5"

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted

Formatted: Bullets and Numbering

Formatted: Indent: Left: 0.5"

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted: Indent: Left: 0.25"

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted: Right: 0.25"

a good instructor and then asking students to evaluate the instructor based on those values. **Holland** noted how this contextualizes each student's response. **Foster** asked how many they survey. **Orlin** replied that they send forms to 75% of former students and get a 30-50% return. **Holland** said that they were not advocating we adopt this approach but thought it was an interesting model.

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted: Font: Bold

Wimberger suggested we should decide whether we will address this in the faculty or whether we should hire consultants. **Foster** asked what happened to earlier attempts at evaluation reform. **Maxwell** noted that the group recommended hiring outside consultants but that it went nowhere. **Wimberger** noted that our evaluation reflects our values as an institution, and **Orlin** followed by suggesting that thus we need to decide these issues. **Edgoose** asked whether a consultant would "get" our culture. **Foster** noted that a consultant might be able to speak to what affects student learning. **Maxwell** returned to a question of whether the form reflects what we value. **Haltom** suggested we open this discussion in a faculty meeting to ensure our list of traits reflects our institutional values. **Cunningham** asked where, apart from evaluations, faculty get a model of good teaching. **Edgoose** noted that each department defines "good teaching" in different ways in their departmental standards. **Bartanen** thought that a whole faculty discussion might reveal common values that we do not currently assess in these evaluations. She noted that students seem to take this process seriously. **Tinsley**, concerned about the effects these forms have on faculty careers, opined that a 2-way feedback system would be best with students writing on professors and vice versa. **Bartanen** responded that the role of colleagues' letters in evaluations is to bring issues of departmental values into play and to look for patterns. She asked whether the forms themselves have ever negatively affected careers. **Foster** similarly asked how dissimilar departments are, and noted that if forms were to adapt to departmental values the resulting diversity of forms might further confuse students.

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted: Font: Bold

Returning to procedural issues, the Senate decided to bring this issue to the full faculty in its April meeting. **DeMarais** suggested that the evaluations subcommittee research consultants. **Beardsley** stated that he would be interested in a consultant's evaluation of our form, to start the process, and **Bartanen** reported that funds could be found for this purpose.

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted: Font: Bold

6) Other Business.

DeMarais noted that although The Logger (p. 29) states the W/WF policy, there seems to be variability in faculty practice of assigning W/WF grades. This varying faculty practice leads to 1) inconsistent decisions, even with the same student, and 2) difficult interactions with students, particularly for faculty who strictly follow the policy. Varying faculty practice thus creates an opening for "grade pressuring." Grade pressuring in its many forms actually does melt faculty resolve, on occasion, because there is little to gain and much to lose for the faculty member who takes a hard line. Inconsistent W/WF grading is also unfair to students as one student may withdraw from a course, receiving a W even if they are failing, while another student in the same class may persevere with the class, perhaps without realizing they could

Formatted: Indent: Left: 0.5"

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted: Indent: Left: 0", Numbered + Level: 1 + Numbering Style: 1, 2, 3, ... + Start at: 1 + Alignment: Left + Aligned at: 0.25" + Tab after: 0.5" + Indent at: 0.5", Tab stops: 0.25", List tab + Not at 0.5"

Formatted: Bullets and Numbering

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted: Indent: Left: 0.25"

Formatted: Right: 0.25"

withdraw, and receive a failing grade. She asked the Faculty Senate to ask the ASC to suggest a way to implement more consistent W/WF grading decisions. **Move to charge the ASC to discuss implementing a more consistent W/WF policy. MSP unanimous.**

Holland noted that she had thought that the Senate had charged the ASC to reevaluate the new course schedule, but they hadn't received the charge. **Orlin** noted that, according to the minutes, this never became a formal charge. **Move to charge the ASC to reevaluate the course schedule in terms of whether it accomplished the goals for which it was implemented. MSP unanimous.**

7) **Adjournment.** The Senate adjourned at 5:22pm

Submitted respectfully,

Julian Edgoose

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted: Indent: Left: 0", Numbered + Level: 1 + Numbering Style: 1, 2, 3, ... + Start at: 1 + Alignment: Left + Aligned at: 0.25" + Tab after: 0.5" + Indent at: 0.5", Tab stops: 0.25", List tab + Not at 0.5"

Formatted: Bullets and Numbering

~~Deleted:~~ agreed with Holland on the vulnerability of faculty but noted that, as a full professor, reviews for him involve no more than "steaming a mirror." At other institutions, he noted, faculty have resigned as a result of scathing comments.¶

Edgoose asked whether we couldn't find some way to combine these evaluations with the official student evaluations, perhaps negotiating questions of interest to all parties and revealing appropriate information (such as the numerical analysis) publicly. **Beardsley** suggested that we could go in the other direction and have an official understanding that these reviews have no official standing.¶

Haltom noted that these systems would probably be open for comment throughout the semester and could engender collusion in the official evaluations. In response, **Orlin** suggested that these evaluations could only be opened up after the official evaluations for the semester are completed.¶

Holland asked Cunningham what the problem was that there wasn't one as such, but that they wished to offer a service to students to complement the current system of scuttlebutt, peer advisors and faculty advisors. **Holland** responded that she thought that this was technology-driven. **Dougharty** noted that the ASUPS imprimatur regulates it in contrast to an underground system. **Beardsley** seconded a desire for a more systematic approach.¶

Tinsley focused the Senate on the importance of detailed attention to process. He asked what would happen if the information posted was incorrect and urged ASUPS to humanize the process. He also asked for more information about the controls at Berkeley.¶

Orlin asked what Cunningham wanted from the Senate. **Cunningham** replied that he would go back with our comments in mind and return with one or two proposals to discuss further with us. He also noted that we could test some formats and withdraw them if they do not work.¶

<#>Student Evaluations of Teaching¶

Beardsley expressed a hope that we could redo evaluation forms in minor ways, and specifically ¶

~~Deleted:~~ ¶

¶

¶

¶

Formatted: Right: 0.25"