

March 3, 2004 Minutes of the General Faculty Committee Meeting

Members in attendance: Bruce Wessels, Thomas Bauman, David Buchholz, Sonny Cytrynbaum, Sudhakar Deshmukh, Abraham Haddad, Hamlin Jennings, Ilya Kutik, Deborah Lucas, Martin Mueller, Eva Redei, Mario Ruggero, Michael Stein, Sigmund Weitzman

1. Approval of February minutes

The minutes from the February GFC meeting were approved by all GFC members present.

2. Consensual Relations Document

GFC members reviewed two versions of the consensual relations document prepared by Prof. J. Lindgren. The less restrictive version was discussed and further modified by the entire committee. All GFC members voted in favor of going forward with the revised document. The revised document will be forwarded to Vice Provost J. Margolis.

3. Program Closure: Organ Program

Prof. Michael Stein presented the proposal to close the organ program in the School of Music. According to a document written by Dean Montgomery, the program is and has been chronically weak. The program is not likely to become excellent due to insufficient support and inadequate facilities. The organ program is not central to the Music School program. The only full time faculty member is leaving and no students would be affected. However, there is a vocal community movement in favor of keeping the program. It was stated that the organ program is an important part of NU and represents an appeal to tradition that should not be abandoned. The GFC members discussed the pros and cons of keeping or eliminating the program. The GFC decided that this is not an issue it would like to pursue. A memo will be drafted and sent to Provost Larry Dumas, letting him know that the GFC does not see this particular program as having a significant impact on NU's academic program and therefore does not see a need to be involved.

A motion was made in favor of sending such a memo. Vote was as follows: 11 in favor
3 opposed.

Martin Mueller will draft a memo on behalf of the GFC in response to the Organ Program closure. Bruce Wessels will submit it to Provost Dumas.

4. Review of University policy statement on space planning

Deborah Lucas presented several issues related to University space planning, one of which is that there is concern about the stewardship of common spaces. GFC members will need to decide whether a separate committee or an ad hoc committee will be needed to deal with common space issues. The GFC will invite Prof. Charles Dowding of the University space committee to speak at the next GFC meeting.

5. University Calendar: Martin Luther King Day

The Associated Student Senate proposes to make Martin Luther King Day a university holiday and seeks GFC support in this matter. GFC members reviewed the letter promoting this action. Some GFC members stated that implementation of this holiday will highlight NU's promotion of diversity and allow more people to attend observance events. Others have stated that making it a paid holiday will result in decreased attendance to current MLK observance events. A motion was made to support the ASG document, which will then go to the University calendar committee for review.

The voting results are as follows: 2 in favor, 7 opposed, 3 undecided.

(2 of the 14 GFC members present at the meeting left before this portion of the meeting and did not vote)

Result: Motion was denied. GFC is not in favor of the document therefore declining support. The GFC supports the current celebration NU has in place to support Martin Luther King Day.

6. Other Business:

Budget sub-committee: Deborah Lucas stated that the GFC budget sub-committee is continuing to learn the ins and outs of NU's budgetary process. Once the information gained is sufficient, sub-committee members will draw up a summary document to be presented to the GFC. Bruce Wessels will send information on the on-line NU Budgetary document to all GFC members.

Benefits sub-committee: Abraham Haddad gave a brief summary of the minutes from the sub-committee's last meeting. The sub-committee would like to once again conduct a survey

comparing benefits of other universities. The last survey was done in 1996. All GFC members were in favor of conducting the survey.

The HSA benefit is still under consideration, although it has a major down side. The \$1000 deductible is a big negative and it is very difficult to find an insurance company willing to support this benefit.

Research sub-committee: The Huron report is now available on-line. GFC members were asked to read the report and give feed back.

New Business:

a. A nomination committee for next year's GFC chair was approved. The names of the committee members are Professors Sigmund Weitzman, Bruce Wessels, Caroline Bledsoe and Thomas Bauman. A nomination slate will be presented for vote next meeting.

b. The next GFC meeting will be held on April 7, 2004, at 7:00 pm in Scott Hall room 201 (the Ripton Room)

Minutes Submitted by:

Diana Snyder