### ABSENCES

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**SENATE MEETING, JANUARY 12, 2009**

Call to Order at 4:06 PM
Announcement: Senator Wolf urges that the posters w/3-word slogan & pine cone be hung on faculty office doors, etc. to promote the HLC process.

Senator McManus volunteered to serve as Recording Secretary for the rest of the academic year. Approved by Senate.

Senator Wolf moved approval of the minutes from December, seconded by Senator Nestle. Motion was carried.

President’s Report
President Brown discussed budget issues. At a meeting before Dec. 25, President Quistgaard called in bargaining unit heads. Letter w/this information regarding $588K unallotment for BSU. The Governor will release his budget plan at the end of January. Further budget forecast data in March and possibly a further unallotment of funds if the data is not good, as is expected. At BSU, positions are being held closely. Monies in accounts should be spent soon if necessary. Expenses of travel has been raised as an issue, more relevant for the other bargaining units because IFO has contractual travel funds. The MnSCU Chancellor’s office is also looking at finances. There has been talk of a 2-year postponement of sabbaticals – this would have to be negotiated and could create huge problems when it would end. The Budget committee met and will be meeting again soon.

Liberal Education issue is the only major issue today.

Parliamentarian Senator Donovan explains how to revisit a proposal already passed by the Senate.

1. Reconsider a motion. This is strictly time-limited to the same meeting or a continuation meeting. Requires that the senator who moves to reconsider have voted with the majority (the side that prevailed) on the vote in question. A motion to reconsider will pass with a simple majority.

2. Rescind a passed motion. To overturn or amend a proposal passed during the term of the same Senate (i.e., during the same academic year). Requires a two-thirds vote to pass. This two-thirds vote is not required for motions passed by previous senates under the rule “par in parem imperium non habet.”

3. When a proposal from a committee is on the floor, it can be Amended, and/or it can be sent back to a committee for changes (Motion to Recommit). Such a motion can be made/passed with or without specific instructions as to how it should be changed.

President Brown expressed hope the Lib-Ed Proposal could be resolved TODAY.

Senator Beech asked for clarification but

Senator Driscoll raised a Point of Order (or Parliamentary Inquiry?): Are we now debating the last portion of the Lib-Ed Committee Report?

Brown: Yes.
Donovan: This is the last piece, the definitions of five “families of disciplines” named last Spring. The Lib-Ed Committee decided not to alter what the Lib-Ed Task Force & the Senate approved last Spring. Faced with the question whether to further define these or not, it seemed to the committee unwise to leave it entirely to the proposer without some better definitions, so the committee formulated these and are hereby recommending them for passage to the Senate.

Senator Fauchald: Likes the approach, asked whether if a course fits the definition of one of the families, it can be put there, e.g., a ‘history of business’ course could go in the History family?

Donovan: Yes, the strict issue is Competencies.

Senator Welle: Likes this better than previous version. Will there be additional rules?

Donovan: Prefixes are not strictly attached to the families of discipline. As with competencies, the evaluation of where a course belongs will be made by the Lib-Ed Committee based on the proposal submitted. They will have flexibility.

Senator Ueland: Does not like the five-families structure. With the History program in the Humanities Department, having a History and a Humanities “Family” seems like double-dipping, a structure that favors a particular program too much.

Senator Peterson: There are limits on Students, the number of courses they can take to satisfy lib-ed requirements within any program, so this won’t favor history in the way that is suggested.

Senator Wolf: further definition is needed lest program prefixes do creep in to assignment of courses under the families.

V.P. Leif: is re-assured that the families are not linked clearly to course prefixes.

Senator Byers: complains that the report was made available only shortly before the Senate meeting.

Brown: reports that the documents were available last week at “Spring Startup.”

Byers: still objects that this did not get to all Senators until very recently.

Senator Knoshaug: supports Senator Byers’ objection, there was not enough time to review this scheme.

McManus: Some senators are confusing the conceptual “families” developed by the Task Force and Committee with the Departmental and Program Names. Ongoing debate within historical discipline whether history is a social science or one of the humanities. It does not fit decisively in either. The “double-dipping” suggestion resolves a conceptual issue on political grounds. This is not honest.
Fauchald: asks how feedback might usefully come to committee over this.

Driscoll: Asks what the Senate can do? How to instruct the committee.

Donovan: The Lib-Ed Committee did not depart or overstep what Task Force & Senate had approved, but the Senate could instruct them to do that. And please continue to send feedback to committee members.

Senator Marek: The five families are not comprehensive: Math, for example, is not part of them.

Sheikholeslami: Does this model follow general standards of the Academy or someone else’s specific program? Is there a “common” model to follow?

Senator Greer: Faculties can choose what families to write courses for; the families are not limited by prefix. The concern about Math not being in the families of disciplines ignores the fact that Math is in the foundation core, so it is strongly present at a fundamental level. The five families of disciplines was not created out of nothing; the Task Force developed the families and the Lib-Ed Committee further developed the structure out of much study, many meetings and many hours of working together.

Peterson: The Task Force & Committee studied many other Lib-Ed systems. There is no common structure. Universities have developed many different arrangements for themselves. And here too, there is a ‘politics of curriculum’ which has a lot to do with how this is done and what a lib-ed curriculum looks like for any institution.

Knoshaug: what is the advantage of keeping these (History & Humanities) separate when there is overlap. The fact that there is disagreement on where history fits is somehow an argument against this system.

Wolf: perhaps the integrative aspect of lib-ed would be promoted by eliminating the history “family.”

Senator Cloutman: Can we limit Departments to the various families?

Donovan: No. Faculty/Departments write courses to the families, not limited by prefix. Students are required to take no more than three courses in one prefix to fulfill the requirements.

Discussion continued: this system will work with what MnSCU mandates, the Transfer Curriculum. We must and will develop a matrix so that this our lib-ed system will translate out and fit into other MnSCU institutions. Current lib-ed structure was significantly changed around 2000 when MnSCU put pressure on us to conform to a new set of rules.

Senator Beech: Why even do this when we must follow the Transfer Curriculum?
Donovan: MnSCU permits multi-track approach to lib-ed. Honors, for example, has a parallel track for Lib-Ed.

Fauchald: So we’ll have three tracks: Transfer Curriculum, Honors, and BSU Lib-Ed.

Ueland: Won’t the growth of this BSU Lib-Ed see the number of courses in the current Transfer Curriculum system shrink?

Peterson: Perhaps a bit, but then too the number of students taking the transfer curriculum will also shrink.

Sheihholeslami: Do we have the courses ready to fit this system?

Donovan: it is up to faculty to propose courses once the BSU lib-ed has been approved.

Sheihholeslami: A major goal should be a good variety of disciplines in each category – are we working to encourage that?

Donovan: That’s what we want to do.

Fauchald: moves to have the Senate direct the Lib-Ed Committee to reduce the number of “families of disciplines” from five to four. Seconded by Beech.

Ueland: proposes amendment (taken as friendly) specifying that the History family be stricken. Fauchald agreed & seconded.

Driscoll: the motion chops out a family of disciplines without explaining what happens. The breadth of lib-ed is threatened by this.

Greer: the proposal is completely arbitrary. The proposers have presented no justification why four rather than five is better.

Brown: noting the time, recesses meeting until 1.26.09

CONTINUATION MEETING 1.26.2009

4:04 Call to Order

Brief Comments by President Brown … Senate will resume debate on Lib-Ed Motion.

Truedson: asks about budget issues, federal aid?

Brown: this will be discussed later.

Beech: proposes amendment to rename history to “Cultures & Civilization”.
Brown & Donovan discussion: amendment is not “friendly” – the current motion is to delete the “history” family entirely. Renaming it would conflict essentially. If the current motion fails, this could be an option.

McManus: Humanities Department discussed the motion. On one hand, we want to support & will support the Lib-Ed Task-Force and Committee. They examined this issue carefully and developed the arrangement through a great deal of work. The motion is purely political. Nevertheless, the historians in the Humanities department surmise the History program might actually be better off in some ways if the History family were eliminated.

Fauchald calls the question on sending the last part of the Lib-Ed report back to the Lib-Ed Committee.

Motion to recommit was carried 13-9

Donovan: Lib-Ed Committee anticipated the vote. It met and passed a new four-families description:

- Arts: This family of disciplines studies the nature and sources of aesthetic value in the things people make, cultivates appreciation for the products and process of human creation, and involves students in the creation of art.

- Humanities: This family of disciplines engages in the scholarly study of important texts and symbolic expressions of the present and historical past.

- Natural Sciences: This family of disciplines uses observation and experimentation to describe and explain natural phenomena.

- Social Sciences: This family of disciplines uses systematic methods to discover, describe, interpret and explain historical events, the social life of human groups and individuals, human interaction, and the interaction between humans and their environment.

Beech: No credits are assigned to the various areas?

Peterson: No. 40 credits overall and at least one course from each family.

Knoshaug: The Art family concludes with “and involves students in the creation of art.” She questions whether the students must then “do” art. Also, maintains there is not enough of the natural sciences in the plan. At least a year of these should be required.

Senator Livingston: Supports the view that the “and involves…” means that students must create art to satisfy definition.
McManus: cites O.Wilde to assert that informed observation and criticism is also Art.

Marek: Questions the lab requirement: some courses do not have labs.

Greer: asserts that the definitions are flexible and that they encourage the integration of knowledge.

Beech: Still wants to know how courses are to be allotted under the four areas.

Peterson: The crucial issue is how courses address the competencies, and that there is a minimum number of competencies that must be addressed and the students must satisfy competency requirements.

Beech: And some courses would also fit under the Integration of Knowledge rubric?

Peterson: Yes.

Donovan: “and “ before the final clause in the Art family does not have to be taken as necessary, it can be indifferent.

Nestel: Moves to amend the “and involves” of the final clause in the Art family description to “may involve” Seconded by Knoshaug.

After discussion, the motion to amend to “may involve” was carried.

With little discussion, the President moved the redefined 4-families of disciplines structure, being the last element of the BSU Lib-Ed program.

The Motion was carried.

Fauchald, Budget Report: Returning to a recommendation from the Budget Committee, asking the Senate to adopt the following. Three sections.

In recognition of the current economic tensions facing Bemidji State University, and in recognition that such tensions will require fiscal decisions that may affect the entire university community, the BSUFA strongly urges the administration to provide appropriate data that ground, justify, and create an overall transparency for fiscal decisions. Given the growing dependence of BSU’s budget on tuition revenue, we believe an empirically supported plan, based on an objective measurement of trends for long-term growth is warranted. The faculty specifically support basing fiscal decisions on empirically supported plans for maintaining the university’s mission, signature themes, and enrollment.

BSU Budget Committee recommends that in planning future budget decreases, the administration make decisions such that the percentage of
total budget designated as “instructional costs” not be reduced below the percentage in the 2008-2009 budget.

The BSUFA Budget Committee requests that the BSUFA Executive Committee request at the next Met & Confer a statement from the administration of their specific intentions regarding the use of summer school and equipment money. Additionally, we would like to know if there is a general intentions to sweep accounts in order to meet budget shortfalls.

Notes that the second paragraph was controversial at the last Senate meeting asking for no percentage reduction in "instructional costs" because not everyone agrees. Governor has hinted that some relief is expected from the Feds' economic stimulus plans, but that will take a few weeks at least to resolve.

Notes that the Governor's budget announcement tomorrow (01.27) will provide more data and so it would likely be better to table this recommendation next Senate Meeting (02.02).

Sheikholeslami has been rising in expectation this will be a growing sector.

Peterson: In hard times more people seek education and the rising stock price of online educational services is just part of a broader education about what will happen.

Some states are facing huge budget problems. California higher-ed might face a 25% cut.

Welle: Generally supports the "instructional" language.

Leif: Objects that "instructional costs" language means the BSUFA is implicitly not supporting dues-paying BSUFA members whose lines are not counted as instructional. We must not take positions cutting out some union members. Doing this is immoral and illegal. Those members should sue the BSUFA/IFO.

Sheikholeslami: wants zero-based budgeting.

Fauxchald: Zero-based budgeting not that important. Does not support threats of lawsuits. Those members who object to this have every right to be heard, but he agrees with the recommendation. Certainly such BSUFA members can come and argue against this how they like. He'll recognize them. But this is the position we should take.

Sheikholeslami: Zero-based budgeting means comparative justification of A vs B, which we need to do.

Brown: We need and expect to be getting more and better data soon and in the weeks ahead from Governor, MnSCU, etc.
Leif: opposes voting for any "instructional" language that does not protect all BSUFA members. Otherwise, he’ll urge such members come and argue that English or History should be cut.

Cheryl Byers: Agrees with first section, disagrees with second, qualified support for third.

Marek: What and who exactly is covered under "instructional costs"? Is the chemistry stock-room guy instructional or not?

Fauchald: it is not appropriate to say "don't cut any IFO position." "Instructional" is clear IPEDS category that is our priority. It is correct and he supports this.

Leif: wants specifics on budget in hopes a more "surgical" resolution can be adopted.

Welle: the instructional/non-instructional split is already out of line. If the budget tilts further away from instructional, that will also hurt BSU in ways that will affect the jobs of the people V.P Leif is speaking for.

Leif: urges that the terms of the middle paragraph be changed from “non-instructional” to something else, something that embraces the ‘educational mission of the university’.

Peterson: likes the idea of standing FOR something, for the “educational mission” rather than against, in this case, reducing instructional costs further.

Fauchald: IPEDS data is agreed upon standard. Instructional/non-instructional is a well-established distinction that can be found there. “Educational Mission” is too ambiguous, can mean anything.

Fauchald: moves to postpone further discussion until 02.02.09 Senate meeting.

Leif: opposes tabling because he wants to defeat the motion now.

Welle: the Budget committee has the data. It is detailed to specific lines. It is available and can be made available.

Sheikholeslami: So how will things go now?

Brown: Governor’s budget announcement tomorrow. It will take some days to figure out how bad that would be for MnSCU. Budget committee will present more data at 02.02.09 Senate meeting.

Michel: Finds the use of hyperbolic rhetoric about lawsuits etc. excessive.

The motion was tabled until the 02.02.09 Senate Meeting.

Brown: Now on to the Rules Committee Constitutional Amendments.
McManus: There are two. They were brought to the Senate in November. We need to approve these by 2/3 (or not) and if so then they go on to referendum votes by the membership.

The second amendment is short, changing an inconsistency in the constitution regarding when terms of officers begin. We want the “first duty day of the Fall Semester” language to be consistent.

The First amendment is more complex. We need to have some kind of “grievance committee” rather than a single grievance officer. That is a requirement of the IFO constitution. Also, there is more grievance work than should be born by a single grievance officer. So the amendment renames the elected grievance officer “Chief Grievance Officer.” There will also be three deputies, nominated by the Chief Grievance Officer and then approved by the Senate. These make up the required “grievance committee.” Language had to be changed in several different areas to effect this change.

**AMMENDMENT 1** (six parts, 1a-1f): Creation of “Grievance Board” headed by “Chief Grievance Officer” to bring BSUFA Constitution into conformity with IFO Constitution. Incidental language modifications added where necessary.

1a. (to IV.B) changes title of BSUFA Grievance Officer to BSUFA “Chief Grievance Officer” with slight stylistic changes;

1b. (to IV.D) eliminates mention of BSUFA Grievance Officer in preference to “officers,” also with slight stylistic changes;

1c. (to V.B.1) redefines “Grievance Officer” to “Chief Grievance Officer” to include serving as chair of “Grievance Board;”

1d. (to V.C.1 that becomes V.C.) changes title of BSUFA Grievance Officer to BSUFA “Chief Grievance Officer;”

1e. (to V.D.1-3 that becomes V.D.1-4) eliminates this whole section on ‘automatic’ removal of Senators & Committee Members for non-attendance [*this issue will be covered by an Article on obligations that will be forthcoming*] and replaces it with section creating “Grievance Board” of Chief Grievance Officer and four Deputy Grievance Officers appointed to two-year terms by Executive Board with the consent of the Senate. [This is required to conform to IFO Constitution and appears to be needed on account of workload.]

1f. (to VII.C.1-2 that becomes VII.C.1) two subsections merged into one, changes “Grievance Officer” to “Chief Grievance Officer.”
AMENDMENT 2. (to V.A) changes the beginning of the term of officers from “the first day of classes in the academic year” to “the first duty day of the fall semester.”

Fauchald: noted there is a more grievance work than one person should have to undertake.

Both amendments passed without opposing votes, satisfying the two-thirds-requirement

Senate Adjourns until the February meeting, 02.02.09