

**FACULTY ASSOCIATION
SPRING GENERAL MEETING**

Thursday, January 17, 2008
Ostrander Auditorium

APPROVED NOTES

Attendance fluctuated throughout the meeting, hitting a peak of 41.

FA President Don Larsson called the meeting to order at 3:06 p.m.

1. Minutes of the General Meeting of August 21, 2007—*Daardi Sizemore/Ann O'Meara moved to approve. Passed.*

2. Faculty Association President's Report (document distributed)—Larsson: We were getting a large number of questions regarding promotion and tenure. During this semester, we are going to put together a FAQ and Best Practices document. We will put out an email for assistance with this. Thanks to Paul Mackie and Lee Cornell for bringing initiatives for new hires to our attention. How can we make new hires feel more welcome? We do have orientation and a dinner. But there is more practical information that we might be able to help with. I will ask for volunteers to work on this. Human Resources will work with us too. Something Steve Bohnenblust did over the past two years, was to meet with various groups of FA members from time to time. We will try to do this again. The arbitrator has ruled regarding the tuition [for doctoral credits] grievance in our favor. This also changes the tenor of the contract negotiations. We will be proffering a constitution change this spring. Program Review and Assessment will change to Evaluation and Assessment. Jackie Lewis: We are looking at institutional assessment, not just departmental or class assessment. Larsson: We will be giving you more information. This action would make the committee parallel to the structure of the Planning and Budget Sub Meets. There have been at least three previous attempts to have a university-wide evaluation committee. This one might have a chance of working. The annual evaluation for Administration this year focuses on the Vice Presidents. This will follow our regular process. The responses are brought to the individuals evaluated. If someone is in their very first year in the position, we give them a pass for that round. We have a new Dean for SET, John Knox from Idaho State U. We have already been in contact with him and seem to be off to a good start. This week we are interviewing a new Dean for Graduate Studies; also, a new football coach. We are also hoping that Administration will finally get the new Assessment Director position announcement out. It will be a MSUASF position. There is a statewide IFO election for President this year. If you have nominations, please send in those names. There are going to be 4 vacancies on the MnSCU Board of Trustees. If there are community members that you thinking could speak to relevant issues, send their names. Jan Cherrington: Is there a deadline? Larsson: Check the announcement on the MSU website.

3. Faculty Association Vice President's Report—FA VP Jim Grabowska: We only have one step-three grievance. It has to do with a retirement issue. I have been very pleased that we have had a lot of cooperation with our administration. There is an honest desire to solve problems here on campus. You should know that any faculty member has the option of being accompanied by a FA member if you need to talk to any administrator

of chair. Larsson: Help spread the word that we are here as a resource. Sometimes people only come to us as a matter of last resort. We can solve difficulties more easily if we are involved from the beginning. Come and talk to us. Remember your rights as faculty members. Whenever there is a formal or quasi-formal action, the administration will always ask if you would like to have an FA representative with you. Grabowska: Larsson began working this fall with other bargaining heads and a desire came up to have workshops on conflict resolutions. There will be another one next week. We are hoping that people will take advantage of this. Larsson: We have a strong history of having very few grievances. Barbara Keating: Do you prefer that the FA member be in an elective office? Larsson: I am personally comfortable with having the faculty member request someone that they are comfortable with. I would just check with us first. Karl Heise: I also notice that after our flurry of activity in the fall, things are pretty sparse in the spring. Should we have this meeting at the start of the semester, before classes? Larsson: We will talk about this at Exec. It would be convenient to have the general meeting after the Spring Semester Exec. Retreat in the morning. Heise: We also used to do legislative breakfasts. And we had a little party at the start of the term. Don Friend: Don't we pay for the annual cookout? Larsson: Yes. Trish Young: We also have IFO Lobby Days on Feb. 27 and 28. This is a great opportunity for us to represent our views to legislators. Larsson: At the end of last semester, the Senate Higher Ed Committee was here on campus and State Senator Kathy Sheran hosted a reception at the YWCA.

4. Discussion Items

a. Contract update—Larsson: We have requested mediation in our bargaining. They will meet in February. You may have read the latest account of the issues. The two sides are very close. It is very clear that MnSCU wants some kind of merit pay. The doctoral tuition waver has now been arbitrated. We are hoping for a fairly quick resolution because of the Legislature going into session. Tom Inglot: How close are we? Larsson: We are fairly close on the money. We were asking for "2 + 2 + 5 percent." MnSCU made a counter-offer and we replied. The sticking points seem to be some language issues and how any salary increase will be spread out over the two years. Inglot: There is a perception that we have a pretty harmonious campus. But there is also a perception that we are very powerless with MnSCU. Our contracts are being settled very late each time. Students have more power than we have. We don't want to end up like Colorado or Wisconsin. Remember what happened when the staff went on strike? Heise: As is typical, very few people speak for everybody. The finance of education has always been a thorny issue. I think we have to be a little more aggressive. Perhaps more contact with people in the legislature. Larsson: Things work relatively well on our campus. We have a local administration that is willing to work with us. MnSCU is another issue. The Board is made of political appointees and it is very politicized. The IFO has had no affiliation with national organizations since we broke from MEA some time ago. We still have no alliances with groups like AFT and AAUP. Inglot: But in this election, the winds are blowing. There is a chance for us to accomplish a lot. Are we using our leverage? Larsson: We need to make clear what the issues are. Grabowska: Remember, there are four MnSCU Board positions open. There is no one from our part of the state. Obviously the present Governor has the authority to vet these. But we might be able to make some inroads if we get a sympathetic voice on the Board. Larsson: Last year, after the best increase for higher education funding in recent memory, MnSCU allocated much of it to "system technology," at more than twice the level recommended by the legislature. Technology takes up more of our time at the state level than any other item. This

particular Chancellor doesn't even listen to the Legislature. Dick Swanson: There are 70 people here. There are 500 who are not. We are negligent. Marty Mitchell: Do we have a strategy to get rid of MnSCU? Larsson: There have been some inquiries. I know some Legislators are interested in the MnSCU budget. Mitchell: But what about the union? Larsson: Russ Stanton is constantly making this point.

b. CESR (Center for Excellence in Scholarship and Research)—Steve Bohnenblust (Director of CESR): The Exec Committee asked me to talk about this position. It has been around for about a year. We now have two graduate assistants in the program (document distributed). We are here to help faculty with your scholar activities. We can help you with the design and the analysis of quantitative aspects. We can also help with technical writing. The faculty who have used us so far have been very satisfied with the work that we have done. Hopefully if we do our job well, there will be an increase in the help that we can provide. If you have ideas or suggestions, let us know. I have heard that we do need to provide qualitative research. Grabowska: What is your turn around time? David Chapman (CESR Graduate Assistant): It is now about a week. Inglot: Is there a procedure for this? Do you just walk in? Bohnenblust: There are no forms to fill out. Inglot: How long will it take? Aimee Pierce (CESR GA): It depends on the project itself. Some have taken months; sometimes I can provide immediate analysis. Inglot: But to set up a meeting? Pierce: We can do that immediately. Larsson: What is the distinction between Research and Sponsored Programs and you? Bohnenblust: That is more for grants. We might be able to help with the technical writing of a grant. Chapman: I would give priority to a manuscript over a grant proposal but we could look at this. Keating: Is this available to the grad students or just faculty? Bohnenblust: This is for faculty only at this point. Keating: We need someone to help the grad students. Bohnenblust: There is a proposal for strategic funding to do exactly that.

c. IFO Delegate Assembly—Larsson: Our Delegate Assembly coming up. This is where we get to propose resolutions that will direct the next round of negotiations and deal with the IFO's own operations. If you are thinking about coming, your costs are covered, unless you want your own room. You will have to pay half the cost of that. You have contractual rights for a paid absence. We still need 6 delegates and we have room for lots of alternates. I want to stress again how important that State President position is. Nancy Black has done a wonderful job. We need someone to keep the momentum going.

d. New Health Program—Larsson: Let us know if you are having any problems with our new Navitus Health Solutions program. Friend: There is a medication that I used to get free through Canada. Now I can't. This is ridiculous. Pat McKinzie: I had a similar experience. But I was able to have a drug added to the plan. Larsson: This is a relatively new process. This is a bind for IFO. We negotiate the health care issues separately from the contract in a consortium with with other units. AFSCME and MAPE are much larger than us. Send us your issues.

Larsson: We are here for you. Let us know how we can be of service.

Meeting adjourned at 4:06 p.m.

Paul J. Hustoles
FA Recording Secretary