

JOINT RETRENCHMENT COMMITTEE

Minutes (revised)

Tuesday, July 2, 2003
McKee 423 3:00 p.m.

Members present: Clough, Gregg, Gustafson, Huang, Jenkins, Lennon, McConnellogue, Reed, Schoneck, and Temkin

Special assistance: Dinges, Garcia, and Gavin

By consensus vote the Committee postponed approval of June 24, 2003 minutes.

Jack Temkin clarified that the Committee cannot publish minutes until they are approved. All approved minutes will be on Senate web site, www.unco.edu/facultysenate/. Temkin asked that committee members please check email regularly for the minutes before the next meeting. They will get out as soon as possible.

The agenda for today is to go through the President's Report section by section. The Committee needs to agree on substance of responses, not the wording at this time.

The Committee also will make writing assignments.

Introduction: Marshall Clough, writer

The committee discussed the contents of the introduction:

- This is where the Committee wants to discuss that this report is not an acceptance that a RIF is the only option.
- Need to set context of response.
- Budgetary considerations may require a reorganization which may have as a consequence a RIF. The Committee has to be clear about what its position is.
- The President has asked the Committee to consider actions that may lead to a RIF because other things that can be done and have been done may not be in the long-term best interest of the University.
- If the group thinks that there may be an adverse consequence to a RIF as well, this may be the place to state that. The Committee has to weigh the costs and benefits of various alternatives, including a RIF. But also recognize that a RIF is not without cost, that it is not purely benefit.
- The Committee should enumerate what some of those costs might be.
- RIF has various consequences that need to be weighed against consequences of variable alternatives.
- The Committee has to look at the potential effects of a RIF on the quality of education.
- It is important that the Committee defines its role in the Introduction.

Section I: Ellen Gregg, writer

(Description of the nature and degree of the financial crisis faced by the University, which gives rise to a claim of financial exigency.)

The Committee discussed the contents of this section:

- Does financial exigency exist? Here is where the Committee says it does or does not.
- Decline in state support is substantial. That reduction may threaten the University's ability to deliver the statutory mission.
- There is uncertainty as to the rate of recovery for UNC in the event that state revenues increase. The real possibility exists that we may face additional reductions of state support.
- The University has already done one-time alternative measures. It will not be enough in the future and the state outlook is not promising.
- The fact is that the budget has been hit.
- The case has not yet been made that exigency exists. The Committee needs to take a look at the long-term financial outlook. It might be appropriate to make those statements in the next section.
- Simply concur with President's Report of how budget has gone.
- That it establishes that there is a substantial reduction in state support. Whether this reduction itself threatens our ability to deliver our statutory mission really depends on how the various alternatives are weighed. It also depends on the implications of further state reductions, admission standard changes, etc.
- Discuss Tabor limits, that's why there is a long-term budget problem, not just short-term.

Section II: Jinny Jenkins, writer

(A list of alternate measures already taken and those which could be taken to avoid resorting to a reduction in force, including dollars and FTE positions saved by normal attrition, and an identification and review of all vacant positions.)

The Committee discussed a list of alternatives. Contextually this is a starting point of where we are.

Normal attrition has been addressed.

President indicated each Division has reviewed remaining vacancies and evaluated the effects of elimination. Has this option been exhausted? It's probably not enough. Finance and Administration vacancies in facilities have been released. There will probably be more of this. Deans are reviewing vacancies and they may need to be filled as essential positions. The Committee has to say at some point that the determination that the vacancies that remain are critical is preliminary and needs to be reconsidered along with everything else in the context of the total review of the University's operations and alternatives.

It is the Committee's responsibility to say what in the document seems to support the need for a RIF. Look at all the alternatives.

What has the University done already, what is still left? What measures could be taken? Be sure to look at items in the Budget Book. However, look at permanent changes rather than one-time.

Section III: Allen Huang, writer

(A statement of the reasons those measures and normal attrition are not adequate to alleviate the financial crisis.)

The Committee suggested the following be included in this section:

- State reasons why not adequate?

- State revenues continue to decline. It will take a long time to get them back. What we've done so far is not adequate for the long-term.
- What normal attrition can be expected to be.
- What other measures aside from those already taken could be taken.

Suggested Alternatives:

- Retirement incentive.
- Attrition histories
- Weigh the impact of reduction of non-tenured and tenured track faculty.
- Increase in teaching loads
- Compensation impact, retirement contribution, benefits
- Reduction in staff
- Possible department consolidation, economy of scale
- Revenue enhancements, student recruitment, increase grant funding, fund raising;
- Differential Tuition
- Tuition structure (driven by Tabor and legislature)
- Effective use of cash-funded program
- Look at general education offerings and electives, the number, class size, variety of courses that are classified as "electives"

Section IV: Ken McConnellogue, writer

(A statement of the reasons the financial crisis is of sufficient severity to justify the belief that a reduction in force may be required.)

The Committee should state here that we agree to consider looking at a reduction in force due to the financial crisis.

The Committee should also respond to the charge here, that it will take up the charge.

Suggest what the role of this Committee should be:

- Consider and evaluate alternatives
- Specify role now, not what it may be.
- Responsibility of this committee is to draft, in consultation with the President, a reduction in force plan if and when the Board orders a reduction in force.
- If and until the Board declares a RIF, this committee should be suggesting criteria that should be used in evaluating programs and services. We will be gathering information that will help us to evaluate alternatives to a RIF.
- The Committee will contribute to and review the comprehensive plan.
- It was suggested that the Committee could look at course evaluations. This brings up the question of whether quality will be a criterion or not. This could be relevant if it is a criterion. We will discuss criteria at a later date.
- Another role the Committee has is communication with and to the University, i.e. faculty and across our colleges. Conceptually, Joint Retrenchment Committee means joint faculty and administration. It is designed to ensure that the decisions concerning a RIF aren't made just by the administration.

Fran Schoneck reported on where the University is in regards to budget:

- Every quarter the University gets a revenue projection. Each one has been progressively worse.
- The June revenue projection was revised downward from 6.1% to 4.1%. However, the Federal government gave the state some emergency money. The governor has banked it to offset any difficulties for the short-term. It's one-time money again. Politically the governor is waiting to see severity of problem and leaving it for the legislature to deal with.
- We hope the University can enter the new fiscal year with the budget we have. Unless things really go south before September 20th, we won't have information until January.

The Committee agreed criteria should be established by the beginning of the school year, which is August 25th.

First draft writers are to send their drafts to Marianne Dinges and she will distribute to the Committee.

The next two meetings, July 7th and July 14th will be held in McKee 127. That is the conference room in the College of Education Dean's Office on the first floor. It is on the north end of the building.

The meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

Jack Temkin
Chair

Marianne Dinges
Recording Secretary