

**Review and Planning Committee
Minutes for November 29, 2000**

RPC minutes, green sheets (and any amendments), and other information can be found on the RPC web site: <http://usgrant.net160.stolaf.edu/rpc/>.

Present: Becker (Chair), Baker, Carrington, Conway, Hamlin, Marty, Miessler, Norton, Postlethwaite, Ross, Schuurman, Sonnega.

The MINUTES for the 11/15/00 meeting were approved as amended.

SUBCOMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS:

A motion was made and approved to appoint Postlethwaite, Hamlin and Kahn to the Sabbatical Leaves Subcommittee. The effective deadline for their work is Feb. 14 so that RPC can act on their recommendations and get them to the Board of Regents by their Feb. 23-24 meeting.

A motion was approved to create a Post-Tenure Assessment Subcommittee. The charge is: To develop a proposal for a formative assessment of tenured faculty and report to the full committee by March 14th, 2001. Ross, Solid, Sonnega and Kahn are asked to serve. It was suggested that an IGS representative also be on the subcommittee.

A motion was made and approved to create an Associate Dean Structure Subcommittee. The charge is: To develop a plan for assessing the associate dean structure and the organization of the faculty into five Faculties, to develop instruments for the assessment, and to report to the full committee by February 14th, 2001. Carrington, Pence, Miessler and Baker are asked to serve on the subcommittee.

CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENT: The Chair mentioned that President Thomforde would like to meet with RPC as early as possible after he begins as President in January, perhaps the 17th.

COLLEGE BUDGET: Alan Norton circulated a draft memo to the campus community about the budget. Discussion included how income is divided between operating expenses and facilities. We were told that the long term prospects for the budget depend on several assumptions. The challenge is to budget regular maintenance. The endowment should be protected so we have future income from it. We are stronger today financially than five years ago, but not yet where we need to be. Annual fund growth has exceeded expectations. We are hoping that the 25% increase in health benefits funding this year will cover costs, as currently appears to be the case.

There was discussion of wage increases compared to inflation. Despite raises, we may not necessarily have improved our position compared to similar institutions. There was concern about the effect of higher medical costs, and the hope that the economic status of faculty is measured after considering inflation and medical costs.

A comment was made underscoring the importance of long range plans for improving compensation, including benefits. It is difficult to decide how to cover family benefits, but it was

noted that family members and dependents are typically covered better elsewhere. A comment was made that uncompetitive salaries and benefits make it difficult to retain quality faculty. We compete with schools with more endowment per student, and which are smaller with less capital to replace.

The question was asked: are we just treading water? Alan responded that in terms of compensation we are holding ground. We are holding our own in support for program costs. We are losing ground in capital expenditures. We have to adequately fund all elements: compensation, program costs, facilities.

Another point of discussion was the relationship between capital expenditures and new facilities, and our ability to attract and retain students. It was noted that both capital and programs need to be supported for the college's long term health.

Interim President Marty noted in the conversation that we enjoy a number of strengths: excellent students, facilities and faculty. The committee also reminded ourselves of the strong rapport and mutual respect between faculty and students at St. Olaf.

Next meeting will be 12/6.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Peter Hamlin, Secretary