



OAKLAND UNIVERSITY SENATE

Oakland University Senate

MINUTES

February 17, 2005

Members present: Aigbedo, Andersen, Bard, Bazaz, Bhargava, Chapman, Cipielewski, Eberwein, Fink, Goldberg, Goslin, Grossman, Hamilton, Haskell, Keane, Klemanski, Latcha, LeMarbe, Lepkowski, Licker, Mabee, McNair, Miller, Moore, Moudgil, Nacy, Polis, Porter, Rowe, Russell, Schott-Baer, Sevilla, Shablin, Stamps, Sudol, Thompson, Tracy, Voelck, Williams, Spencer-Wood

Members absent: D. Berven, K. Berven, Blume, Claiborne, Downing, Dunn, Frick, Giblin, Graves, Hightower, Khapoya, Machmut-Jhasi, Maines, Oakley, Otto, Schochetman, Schweitzer, Sethi, Stano, Wood

Summary of Actions:

1. Information items

- a. Presentation by Mr. Russi.
- b. General purpose classrooms -- Mr. Shablin & Mr. Preisinger
- c. State of academics in the Athletic Dept. by Mr. Mehl.

2. Roll call and approval of the minutes.

3. Motion to approve the B. S. with a major in Business Economics (Ms. McNair, Mr. Tracy) Approved.

4. Motion to establish a new procedure to fill interim vacancies on standing committees. (Mr. Russell, Mr. Tracy) Approved.

5. Motion to create the Student Academic Affairs Committee. (Mr. Russell, Mr. Bazaz) First reading.

Mr. Moudgil called the meeting to order, introduced Ms. Hildebrand who was substituting as secretary, and extended a special welcome to President Russi. The Provost remarked that it's no secret that the economic environment is difficult and he praised Mr. Russi for having taken on a leadership role for Oakland and also for all the higher education institutions in Michigan as chair of the President's Council. He noted that President Russi has proposed plans to the state government to aid the academic mission of higher education and that on Nov. 8, 2004 he was invited to address the Detroit Economic Club. Mr. Russi's [speech](#) highlighted the problems higher education is facing in the state and had significant news coverage.

President's Report

Mr. Russi thanked the Senate for inviting him, noting that these are interesting times given the fast pace at which things change. Before beginning his comments, he reminded the group that

the Keeper of the Dream dinner is being held tonight and how delighted and honored we are to have Coretta Scott King on campus to give the keynote address.

Then he turned his attention to the question of what is going on with state funding, starting with the [Cherry Commission's report](#). That Commission was to look at the relationships between higher education and economic development and to consider ways in which higher education could promote, advance and increase revenue to the state. There is a proven correlation between degrees and economic development and one charge to the Commission was to propose strategies to double the number of degreed adults in Michigan. As it stands now, Michigan is below average in the number of individuals with degrees. The report dealt with four topics:

1. preparation: the need for adequate preparation for higher education, focusing on improving high schools;
2. participation--how can one get more adults engaged in higher education;
3. completion -- once in the system, how can we improve the rate at which they succeed; what ways are there to improve retention and graduation rates;
4. economic development--how can one develop strategies to improve the economic situation in the state, increase business activity, jobs. etc.

The report was very supportive of higher education and was heavily endorsed and appeared to be a positive step forward.

Mr. Russi then stated that Governor Granholm's [State of the State speech](#) sounded encouraging and centered on creating jobs in Michigan. The speech was encouraging since there was a direct link between supporting higher education and job creation. Michigan currently has the second highest unemployment rate in the country and a zero job growth rate. There were four areas in the speech related to higher education. The first involved selling a two billion dollar bond to support research, innovation and development. This isn't a new idea and this venture has worked in other states. However, there is a question of how much debt the state has and its capacity. He added that Michigan's debt is quite low on a per capita basis, so there's room to borrow money to support special initiatives. Second, the Governor proposed another amount of money, \$800 million, for new buildings, infrastructure support, upgrading and repairs and renovation of research facilities. A third proposal was a new merit scholarship, doing away with the current \$2500 for those who meet certain criteria and replacing it with \$4000 for anyone who completes two years of higher education--this would include community colleges and technical schools as well as colleges and universities. The idea here is to support completion. The fourth area was that of credit amnesty, a proposal to allow adults who have been out of school for awhile the opportunity to re-enroll and utilize their existing credits.

Mr. Russi reported that the current fiscal year 2005 budget was developed with the understanding that the state would not cut higher education any more than 2% and in return, the Governor asked the Presidents of the 15 institutions not to increase tuition more than the Detroit consumer price index. The Presidents agreed and this agreement was put officially in writing. In that agreement it is clear that higher education would not be cut any more than the agreement stipulated. However, a week ago, Governor took two actions to deal with the state budget deficit for this year. First she issued an Executive Order for a 1.87% cut across the board in higher education and cuts in other areas. For OU that translates into \$850,000. The reaction from higher education was disappointment and anger, given the Cherry Commission's

report and the agreement. The Governor's second action was to make the 1.87% cut permanent and to insist on a cap on tuition of 5% or \$307 per student, whichever is the greatest. The Governor's proposal also placed another \$100,000,000 for higher education aside for maintenance purposes but this funding needs legislative support. While this maintenance funding is good, it needs to be noted that the one hundred million is a one time fund, the cut is permanent and long term.

Mr. Russi stated that we need to advance two messages:

- 1) Do not stipulate tuition constraints. If you cut funding, let the institutions manage their own affairs and deal with their situations as best they can. Community colleges, for example have other sources of revenue not available to 4 year institutions. Also, appointed boards are constitutionally autonomous and should be allowed to operate their institutions in a responsible manner. Let the Boards do their jobs.
- 2) We need to support a proposal for floor funding language that would place in the budget a certain amount of money to fund each student in Michigan. In this year's budget, the amount is approx. \$4000 per student. The amount of money isn't the key, the principle of floor funding is the key.

Mr. Russi added that the Executive Order must be approved by the Appropriations Committee and this past Tuesday the Committee turned down the Executive Order and asked for a delay. Then on Wednesday, the Committee approved a modified EO that included the 1.87% cut but specified that, if the state economy improves and takes in more money, that money would go to higher education. Today, Thursday, the Senate looked at the agreement and rejected it, so now the Appropriations Committee will need to negotiate a new Executive Order. He noted that we will know more next week.

Having completed his comments and update, Mr. Russi entertained questions from the audience. Ms. McNair asked if contacting legislators would be of use. Definitely, Mr. Russi responded, adding that we try to get in touch with all of them, and in particular, the members of the Appropriations Committee. He added that party politics complicate matters and that approval of the bond issue proposed by the Governor would take a 2/3 vote of the legislature. Mr. Sevilla asked about the money mentioned earlier-- the bond issue, the scholarship--where is that in the process. Mr. Russi replied that it was the Governor's proposal and now needs to move through the legislature. Mr. Tracy asked how the larger institutions feel about formula funding and Mr. Russi replied that, as long as there's a win in it for them, they've supported it. Mr. Shablin commented that institutions have in the past been rewarded for increasing enrollment and it appears in these scenarios that enrollment growth is not recognized. Mr. Russi responded that's part of the floor funding for every student, so there would be a reward for increased enrollment. Mr. Porter asked how the 1.87% cut would be managed. Mr. Russi noted that, given that it is late in the fiscal year which ends in June, we don't have much flexibility, adding that we are waiting to see what the real effect of the Executive Order will be.

General Purpose Classroom Improvements

Thanking President Russi, for his updates, Mr. Moudgil then invited Mr. Shablin to update the Senate on classroom improvements. For many years Academic Affairs has allocated \$50,000 for instructional classroom enhancement. This year, with the President's support, a substantial

additional sum of \$482,000 was allocated to launch a major initiative to improve the most heavily utilized classrooms. An additional \$40,000 was provided by Facilities Management. Mr. Shablin then summarized what is happening with the [South Foundation Hall improvement project](#):

- There are 101 general purpose classrooms on campus, located in 11 buildings; 60 of the general purpose classrooms are in buildings built between 1959 and 1970; these classrooms receive basic maintenance and upgrades have been limited due to lack of funds; instructional technology services is provided on a mobile delivery basis.
- South Foundation houses the highest number of general purpose classrooms (37), it is the most heavily utilized classroom building with over 1800 students in the building during any given class period, 31 of the 37 classrooms are equipped at Level I technology which means resources are provided on a delivery basis.
- A budget of \$522,000 was established to upgrade the technology and physical environment on the first floor of South Foundation; including all 13 classrooms, the corridor and stairwells; Construction: \$97,037, Technology: \$248,690, Furniture: \$176,100
- the South Foundation improvement project will include physical improvements such as lighting, painting, new floors and new classroom furniture; technological improvement upgrades to Level III standard, resulting in the look and feel of a new first floor and stairwells.
- Renovations are scheduled to begin Monday, May 2, 2005 and be completed by Wednesday, Aug. 31, in time for the start of classes.

Mr. Shablin concluded by thanking the SFH improvement committee: Janet Hepburn, George Preisinger, Kathy Rowley and Steve Zmich and opened the floor for questions. Mr. Aigbedo asked about plans for the other floors; Mr. Shablin replied that he hopes the funds would soon be available to renovate the entire building. Mr. Moudgil commented that our goal is to make sure all the classrooms are presentable and equipped with the appropriate technology and thus present a friendly effective environment for student learning.

State of Academics in the Athletic Department

Mr. Moudgil prefaced his introduction of Mr. Mehl with comments that we can certainly be proud of our student athletes, both for their athletic accomplishments and their academic achievements. He then turned the floor over to Mr. Mehl, who presented an [update](#) concerning the academic achievement of Oakland athletes. Noting that this report has become an unofficial tradition at the Senate, Mr. Mehl emphasized that academic achievement is a core value in intercollegiate athletics. He reported that we have 209 student athletes and displayed charts showing the grade point averages for the top athletes in each sport. He also reported that, on the average, 69% of OU's athletes have earned a 3.0 or higher in the fall of 2004. The cumulative GPA of all the student athletes is 3.012 and around 90 students each year have been selected to the Mid-Continent Conference All-Academic Teams. Mr. Mehl noted that Bryan Rzpka was named the top student athlete in the entire Mid-continent Conference in prior year and that is a remarkable achievement. In addition a number of students have been selected as

NCAA Leadership Conference participants. He closed by stating that Oakland's athletes continue to flourish because of the dedication and hard work of the people in this room. On behalf of the students he thanked the Senate. Mr. Moudgil asked him to convey our congratulations to the student athletes.

Minutes and Roll Call

Following the roll call, the [minutes](#) of the January meeting were approved unanimously. (Moved Mr. Polis, Seconded Mr. Latcha)

Business Economics Bachelor of Science degree

The first item under old business was a second reading of the [proposal](#) for a Bachelor of Science degree with a major in Business Economics. Mr. Moudgil noted that the wording of the motion has been slightly revised so that the name of the degree would conform to standard practice and asked the Senate for approval of the new wording. Following that approval, Mr. Tracy summarized the changes that were incorporated after the last Senate meeting. The Senate then proceeded to unanimously approve the motion:

MOVED that the Bachelor of Science degree with a major in Business Economics be approved.

Senate Committee vacancies

The next item, a motion to permit the Steering Committee to fill interim vacancies on standing committees was opened for discussion. Mr. Moudgil noted that the revised motion reflects the discussion at the last meeting of the Senate. Thus, the Steering Committee requests acceptance of the current motion as a substitute for the one originally moved. The Senate approved the substitute motion, there was no further discussion and the motion was unanimously approved.

MOVED that the Steering Committee may fill vacancies on standing committees occurring during the academic year. The appointments will be for the rest of the academic year and will be presented as an information item on the next Senate agenda.

New Business

The first and only item of new business was a motion from the Steering Committee to create a Student Academic Affairs Committee (Moved by Mr. Russell and seconded by Mr. Bazaz) .

MOVED that the Academic and Career Advising Committee and the Admissions and Financial Aid Committee be discontinued and be replaced by the Student Affairs Committee as a standing committee of the Senate effective Fall 2005 with the following charge and membership:

Charge: To promote the academic success of students by considering, evaluating, and recommending policies and procedures in the areas of advising, financial aid, registration, admissions, student life, career development, and any other areas of

student academic interest that may be brought before it.

Membership: Six faculty serving staggered three-year terms, one of whom shall be chair; President of Student Congress; one additional undergraduate student; one graduate student; and *ex officio* non-voting members: Vice President for Academic Affairs or designee, Vice President for Student Affairs or designee, Dean of Students, and Professional Advisers? Council designee.

Opening the discussion, Ms. Klemanski expressed concern that there was no guaranteed representation from Admissions or Financial Aid. Mr. Russell responded this was discussed and it was thought that when issues relating to admissions or financial aid were on the agenda, representatives from those units would be invited to attend and participate in the deliberations. Speaking on behalf of the AP's in those offices, Ms. Rowe noted that many of the processes involved in these areas are complex and it might be difficult to drop into a meeting and bring everyone up to speed. She felt that representatives from these areas needed to be consistent members of this committee. One possibility, suggested by Mr. Moudgil, would be for the VP designees to be from those areas. Mr. Russell noted that financial aid policies are more or less prescribed and that it was unlikely the committee would be dealing much with their details. The committee would be more interested in the general policies related to admissions and financial aid. The Provost said that the Steering Committee could communicate to the appropriate bodies that representation on this committee should reflect this discussion. Since admissions are now separated between Student Affairs and Academic Affairs, Ms. Rammel expressed concern that a representative from Student Affairs would be looking at it from an undergraduate admissions point of view and wondered if graduate admissions were intended to be included within the purview of this committee.

Ms. Eberwein indicated that she was in favor of the merger of the former Advising, Financial Aid and Admissions Committees, but had concerns about the title of the committee and thought that we need to clearly distinguish the areas covered by UCUI and the Graduate Council from this new committee. She also felt that these committees would need to consult with each other. Ms. Schott-Baer asked if the students would be voting members; Mr. Russell replied yes. Responding to the concern over the committee's name, Mr. Sudol stated that various names for the committee were considered. Since the focus of the committee is on students' academic success, the name Student Academic Affairs was the closest they could come. Mr. Ciplewski commented that the Steering Committee could perhaps come up with wording that would clearly distinguish the different purviews of UCUI and this new committee. Mr. Shablin inquired about the committee's recommendations; would they come to the Senate or go to the offices of admissions/financial aid/advising. Mr. Moudgil responded that it would depend, noting that the recommendations would be advisory only. In response to a question about the representatives from Student Affairs, Mr. Sudol stated that it was assumed that the VP for Student Affairs would designate someone from either Admissions or Financial Aids as the VPSA designee. Ms. Rowe pointed out that this would create an either/or; either someone from Admissions or someone from Financial Aid would be appointed and that individual would lack the knowledge base of both areas; nor, she added, will you have a representative from the Registrar and Graduate Study. Mr. Porter asked about an amendment to add members that would address these representational issues. Mr. Sudol responded that the reason the decision was made to merge the committees is that they didn't have enough to do and that very few issues relating to admissions or financial aid are expected to come before the committee. Ms. Eberwein stated that the committee's name may not appeal to those faculty who are interested in admissions or financial aid but she felt it would catch the eye of those

who would have otherwise volunteered for UCUI or Graduate Council. Mr. Russell inquired about the upcoming call for volunteers for Senate Committees, asking whether or not this new committee would be listed. Mr. Sudol responded yes.

Concerning committee assignments, Ms. Moore asked the Steering Committee to look at how membership is defined on some committees, and in particular, the General Education Committee. She thought that perhaps that committee should have designated seats similar to Assessment and UCUI's membership; that we need more balance in some areas. Mr. Tracy noted that any change to designated seats would require Senate approval and there isn't any time to make this change this year. Mr. Moudgil assured the membership that when assignments are made, every attempt is made to achieve balance on the committees, but sometimes it is difficult if there aren't enough volunteers from a particular area.

With no further discussion, the motion will return for a second reading at the next Senate meeting. Mr. Tower moved for adjournment and the Senate adjourned at approximately 4:30 p.m.

Submitted by:

Linda L. Hildebrand

Substitute Secretary to the Senate 2/17/05
replacing Tamara Machmut-Jhasi

4/19/05

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