

## Oakland University Senate

First Meeting  
September 19, 1996

### Minutes

Members present: Abiko, Alber, Andrews, Benson, Blume, Bricker, Brieger, Briggs-Bunting, Buffard-O'Shea, Christina, Cole, Connellan, Dahlgren, Dillon, Downing, Garfinkle, Gilroy, Gordon, Hahn, Haskell, Herold, Hildebrand, Keane, Landsberg, Long, Mahamwal, Miller, Moore, Moran, Nesbary, Olson, Otto, Pettengill, Reynolds, Rozek, Russi, Sahu, Schochetman, Schwartz, Talbert, Tower, Wharton, Witt

Absent: Awbrey, Fliedner, Frankie, Gardner, Hovanesian, Jarski, Kazarian, Kheir, Liboff, Lilliston, Meehan, Meuser, Polis, Purcell, Raiss, Reddy, Rice, Riley, Sevilla, Speer

Mr. Connellan called the first meeting of the University Senate to order at 3:15 with words of welcome to the assembled group.

The chair then introduced Mr. Russi who presented an update on the charter schools. Mr. Russi recapped all the activities over the months that led to the chartering of three schools. (Chronology included as Appendix A) The basic premise for approval was that the school must have a direct link to a unit on campus. During the summer of 1996 conversations with SPRC, SBRC and the Steering Committee took place. He reported that these committees provided feedback and suggestions which have been incorporated into the on-going activities of the charter school program. The SPRC recommended that an oversight committee be established to ensure that the academies are operating at a level we can be proud of. In addition to the Oversight Committee, Ms. Melhado has been assigned the responsibility for directly monitoring and overseeing the charter schools. The SPRC also suggested some other changes: expanding faculty participation in the review of applications; a tighter linkage with the review committee and SPRC, SBRC and the Steering Committee; better communication among all these bodies; direct involvement of SPRC with the activities of the review committee; feedback about oversight activities and what is actually happening in these schools. Mr. Russi noted that, in addition to the quarterly reports to the committees, the university has asked for monthly reports to obtain data on what is actually going on in the schools to compare with what they said they would do. Ms. Otto spoke of the unique opportunities these schools provide for the School of Education and Oakland University. Two of the schools have a strong technology focus which ties in with what OU is doing. Nsoroma is an African-centered academy which provides the opportunity to support an alternative learning experience for children and will give our students a chance to experience different teaching models. Mr. Downing spoke of the connection to the university mission with emphasis on technology, science and mathematics.

Mr. Christina reported that the Senate Steering Committee did not have a chance to formally consider the charter schools proposals. While there had been a joint meeting of the Charter Schools Committee, the SPRC and the Steering Committee, a number of members were unable to attend and there was no formal vote. Mr. Russi explained that the SPRC did not request the approval of the Steering Committee, only that conversations occur. Mr. Christina was concerned over the Steering Committee's lack of opportunity to have any input into the

process. He also wanted to report that, in the only vote he was aware in the School of Education and Human Services, the concept of charter schools was not approved. Mr. Russi commented that obviously we need tighter linkage between all the committees. Mr. Moran remarked that if the College is going to have links with these schools, maybe someone from the College should be on the Oversight Committee. In a similar vein, Mr. Garfinkle noted that if these schools are very involved in science and technology, then OU should have faculty from these units on site and involved in the oversight process. Also an oversight process does not guarantee that they will meet our expectations and he wondered, what happens then. Mr. Russi replied that it depends; the reason for monthly oversight is to provide feedback and an opportunity for correction to the schools. However, if standards are not met, OU will pull their charter. In response to Ms. Cole's query about technology, Ms. Otto stated that she was referring to technology as it relates to our strategies for teaching teachers and also the use of technology in the classroom.

There being no further discussion about charter schools, Mr. Connellan then reported on a variety of information items. Enrollment figures for the fall semester show a slight increase of 1%-2% over last fall in FYES, with an increased headcount of around 300. The Science Building is around 87% complete and about six weeks behind scheduled completion; however it looks as though the move into the new building will take place on schedule. The bids for the new Sports/Recreation building came in over budget and have been pared down and the building now has Board approval. Discussions concerning a new business/classroom building are continuing in Lansing, the search for a new VPAA is underway and a committee has been formed to look at the athletic program at OU. Mr. Riley asked about the status of the new animal care facility and Mr. Russi replied that it is in the design stage.

The first order of business, approval of the April 4, 1996 minutes, was moved by Mr. Christina with the proviso that they be corrected to note that Ms. Papazian and Ms. Cole were indeed at that meeting. Following a chorus of seconds, the minutes were approved as corrected.

Discussion then turned to a single item of old business, a motion which specifies that, during the term for which they are appointed, no member of a Senate committee shall receive any money, award or anything of value as a result of an action or recommendation of a Senate committee of which they are a member. Mr. Andrews reminded the Senate of the extended and thoughtful discussion that occurred at the April 96 Senate meeting. He also clarified that the motion is directed at individuals and not at corporate entities such as departments; that is, the Chemistry Department would not be prohibited from receiving an award if someone from that department happened to be serving on the committee making the award. Mr. Sahu spoke in favor of the motion, stating that he doesn't see any way we could not approve it since it is so obviously right. The Senate agreed and the motion was approved.

Moving on to new business, the usual September agenda item to complete the staffing of Senate committees was moved by Mr. Dillon, seconded by Mr. Andrews and the names listed in the agenda were approved for the committees and terms specified.

The last item of business, a motion to revise the charge to the University Committee on Undergraduate Instruction, was moved by Ms. Reynolds who pointed out the underlined changes in the text, the comment explaining the changes and the presence of the existing charge for comparison purposes. Ms. Gilroy seconded the motion. In reply to a query regarding the ethnic diversity monitoring responsibility of the Committee, Mr. Follo, chair of UCUI,

described the Committee's long discussions and consultations with department chairs and Committees on Instruction concerning this. Mr. Downing expressed his belief that the addition of the ethnic diversity oversight mirrors the language approved by the Senate. Speaking of a chilling effect on academic freedom, Mr. Garfinkle expressed concern over the idea of UCUI monitoring the content of a course. On the other hand, he conceded, if the Committee is going to decide whether or not the course fulfills the requirement, they must look at the course content. He felt language was needed to specify that UCUI would monitor only that portion of a course related to the ethnic diversity requirement; also, that faculty should be given the option, if they wished, of not teaching a course with the diversity component and thus not have to worry about any monitoring. Mr. Andrews tested the waters about waiving the second reading; however, given the possibility of additional language to clarify the ethnic diversity responsibility, the proposal to waive second reading was dropped and the motion will return for a second reading and possible amendment on the October Senate agenda.

Committee reports: [note: copies of the complete reports are available in the VPAA's office]

The Campus Development and Environment Committee had a busy year. Mr. Brieger reported on various areas of involvement which included reviewing parking proposals with emphasis on the minimal destruction of green areas, signage, the sports center and food service court proposals, sculpture, outdoor furniture, the library mall plans, improved interior signage, sidewalks, fire alarms, paving, campus landscaping, etc. As chair he was also involved with specific committees on signage, the food court and the sports center. Mr. Christina wondered if the parking lot behind Lepley would be closed; Mr. Brieger replied it is likely. Mr. Sahu expressed concern over some of the sculptures on campus and his opinion that all the buildings, sculpture and art work should be aesthetically pleasing. He stated that commuter students need parking but we don't want the entire campus to be nothing but parking lots. Mr. Brieger agreed that aesthetics are important and that we don't want it to look like an industrial campus. As for sculptures and other art on campus, he simply commented that there's no accounting for taste. He called attention to the master plan which incorporates screening and various other means of adding aesthetic value to campus. In reply to Mr. Keane's query about plans to air-condition South Foundation Hall to make classes more comfortable for students and faculty, Mr. Brieger responded that only Sunset Terrace is on the current list. A memo to Ms. Aldrich was suggested as the next step for those wishing to add air-conditioning to other buildings on campus. Mr. Christina wondered about the Committee's involvement in the Haunted House in the field near Walton/Adams. Mr. Brieger replied that it is as mysterious to the Committee as it is to everyone else. Enlightenment came from Mr. Connellan who reported that the field is being rented and is providing revenue for the university.

Mr. Russell reported on the activities of the Senate Planning Review Committee. During the year the committee dealt with proposed new programs such as the Ph.D. in Applied Mathematics, the M.A. in Biology; worked with the Senate Budget Review Committee to develop a form for new degree programs that could be used by SPRC, SBRC, the Graduate Council and UCUI; monitored the developments related to the Strategic Plan and proposed ways to improve their monitoring responsibility; discussed the use of discretionary funds; endorsed the Strategic Lobbying effort and suggested additional ways of presenting OU's case to emphasize unique qualities of OU; met jointly with SBRC and the administration; began exchanging minutes with the Graduate Council and University Committee on Undergraduate Instruction; reviewed administrative changes. In reply to Ms. Buffard O'Shea's questions relating to OU's uniqueness, Mr. Russell answered that SPRC believes OU's faculty is more successful in obtaining grants and that the public service activities of some groups are

noteworthy. Mr. Russi commented that the OU's approach worked with the legislature last year and that he appreciated the SPRC's suggestions, noting they may be useful this year.

The Academic Computing Committee had an interesting year, reported Mr. Mathieson, and dealt with a variety of issues. He noted that perhaps the most important was the increase in computing activities on campus and the concern that faculty may be overlooked. As one example he told of the Information Outreach Steering Committee which, without faculty input, developed a document listing limits, prohibitions and sanctions relating to information technology on campus. The document was created without faculty input and was sent to the Academic Computing after the event. The Committee was able to provide feedback which resulted in the revision of the document. The ACC was able to obtain lists of other committees on campus working on information technology issues and establish communication links with them. He reported that the networking of the campus is going well and progress is being made on developing desk-top standards and support. He mentioned the need to improve our use of the web as well as the need for additional training opportunities and improved support for web activities. Mr. Connellan interjected that more help is needed and anyone willing to provide assistance should contact Mr. Stewart, Mr. Joswiak or Ms. Wersching. Mr. Moran expressed concern over the fact that our web page does not compete as well as others. Mr. Mathieson responded that someone is working on it.

Good and Welfare.

As part of good and welfare, Mr. Moran reported that the Senate Budget Review Committee will endeavor to keep the Senate informed and up to date during the coming year. He also wondered about the timetable for hiring of new faculty; Mr. Connellan replied that faculty hiring has already been discussed by the Deans and will be going to the President.

And finally, Mr. Bricker expressed serious concerns about a number of university initiatives that were implemented in the last year without Senate involvement or input. He stated that it was unfortunate that the Senate didn't have a chance to make its opinion known regarding charter schools and the Henry Ford Nursing alliance. These were two major initiatives that were announced in the media and will have great significance with regard to the impact of the institution on the community. The fact that the Senate had no say was in part our fault he admitted; no one spoke up. And that the Senate did not consider them in any systematic fashion he stated was shameful. He was also concerned possible decisions relating to Division I athletics, remarking that he has no confidence that the Senate will have any input on these decisions. He worried that the senate is in a mode of not addressing initiatives that will greatly impact and define the character of the institution. He added that he hopes this worry proves to be unfounded.

There being no further business, Mr. Connellan entertained motions to adjourn.

Submitted by  
Linda L. Hildebrand  
Secretary to the University Senate

Appendix A

## **Chronology of Charter School Activities**

February 1994 -Ad Hoc Blue Ribbon Charter School Committee appointed.

January 1995 -Ad Hoc Blue Ribbon Charter School Committee reactivated and unanimously endorsed a "Position Paper on Charter Schools" which established a Charter School Council.

May 1995 -Chair of SPRC communicated that "we believe that they (material contained in position paper) represent an appropriate response for OU to make this new educational initiative at the state level."

May 1995 ` -Chair of SPRC requested that SPRC & SBRC be kept informed of Charter School Council's actions

July 1995 -Recommendation to the Board of Trustees for approval of a Statement of Intent to Approve Charter Schools

August 1995 -Statement of Intent to Approve Charter Schools approved by Board of Trustees

September 1995 -Charter Schools Council established to develop and propose a policy on charter schools

October 1995 -Policy on Public School Academies, Criteria for the Evaluation of Applications & a draft Application approved by the Board of Trustees

October 1995 -Public School Academy Application Review Committee established

March 1996 -Application for a Public School Academy finalized

March-July 1996 -Formal review of 11 applications by the Public School Academy Application Review Committee

July-August 1996 -Conversations with SPRC, SBRC & SSC

August 1996 -3 applications forwarded for Board approval

August 1996 -Public School Academy Oversight Committee established

August 1996 -Coordinator for Urban Partnerships and Public School Academies appointed.

August 1996 Board of Trustees approves charters for: Academy of Michigan; Nsoroma Institute; Elbert Thomas Clark Academy

### **Public School Academy Application Review Committee**

Mary Otto, Chair

Susan Aldrich

Rochelle Black

David Downing|  
Robert Eberwein  
Susan Gerrits  
Nina Googasian  
Catherine Lark  
Pat Nicosia

**Public School Academy Oversight Committee**

**Mary Otto, Chair**

**Dave Downing**

**Nina Googasian**

**Catherine Lark**

**Angie Melhado**

**Pat Nicosia**

*Back to*

OAKLAND UNIVERSITY

**S E N A T E**

*Home Page*