



OAKLAND UNIVERSITY SENATE

Oakland University Senate

Sixth Meeting
Thursday, March 14, 1996

Minutes

Members present: Andrews, Benson, Briggs-Bunting, Bryant, Buffard-O'Shea, Caradonna, Cole, Dahlgren, Dillon, Downing, Finucane, Fliedner, Garfinkle, Gilroy, Graham, Hahn, Hansen, Haskell, Hildebrand, Hovanesian, Jackson, Jarksi, Kazarian, Keane, Kheir, Kleckner, Liboff, Lilliston, Long, Meuser, Miller, Moran, Nesbary, Olson, Papazian, Pipan, Polis, Reynolds, Rozek, Russi, Schochetman, Sevilla, Slywka, Tower, Wharton

Members absent: Christina, Connellan, Frankie, Gordon, Meehan, Moore, Otto, Perry, Reddy, Rice, Riley, Rohde, Sahu, Schwartz, Speer, Talbert

Summary of actions:

1. Approval of Feb. 1996 Senate minutes. (Mr. Andrews, Mr. Moran)
2. Motion to recommend to the President and the Board approval of the new Constitution of the College of Arts and Sciences. (Mr. Downing, Mr. Andrews) Second reading. Approved.
3. Motion to recommend to the President and the Board the establishment of a program in Accounting leading to the Master of Accounting (M.Acc.) degree. (Mr. Dahlgren, Mr. Tower) Second reading. Approved.
4. Motion to recommend to the President and the Board the establishment of a program in Software Engineering leading to the Master of Science degree. (Mr. Dahlgren, Mr. Andrews) First reading.
5. Motion to recommend to the President and the Board the establishment of a program leading to a Doctor of Philosophy degree in Applied Mathematical Sciences. (Mr. Dahlgren, Mr. Downing) First reading.

Calling the meeting to order at approximately 3:15 p.m, Mr. Russi turned first to the minutes of the February 15th meeting. Mr. Andrews moved, seconded by Mr. Moran that they be approved and the Senate concurred without any corrections being suggested. On behalf of the Senate Steering Committee which will soon be making committee assignments for the coming year, Mr. Russi asked that Senators encourage their colleagues to turn in their request forms for Senate Standing Committees. Right now only 38 volunteer forms have been returned and there are around 45 vacancies.

College of Arts and Sciences Constitution

Mr. Russi then opened the floor for discussion of the revised Constitution of the College of Arts and Sciences, now at its second reading. Ms. Briggs-Bunting raised concerns that were

expressed in the College by some faculty over the nature of the representation of the Assembly, comparing the electoral procedure to having California voters elect Michigan Senators. She argued that the at-large election wherein everyone in the College votes for the social sciences or humanities representatives may result in groups that are not necessarily truly representative of their areas. Mr. Andrews noted that the procedure for election to the Assembly is the same as that used for Senate elections; all members of the College may vote for their representatives on the Assembly and the Senate. This brings up another issue, Ms. Briggs-Bunting explained, in the Senate, there have been efforts at block voting to secure for some departments perhaps disproportionate membership. Another recommendation she is hearing from faculty is that no more than two people from a department should have a representative seat on the Senate or Assembly. She recommended that the Constitution be returned to the Assembly for further Consideration. Mr. Moran spoke against that idea, pointing out that the Constitution was approved by the College faculty by a 2-1 margin (twice actually, due to a procedural error in the first balloting).

Ms. Papazian prefaced her remarks by stating that she was not privy to the Assembly discussion and asked for clarification concerning the composition of the Executive Committee, especially now that it has added powers in naming Dean's and Chairs. She stated that care needs to be taken to make sure the Executive Committee is representative of the faculty. She also wondered if the composition specified for the Executive Committee should be like that of CAP, where it is specified that no more than 1 person from a department should serve. Mr. Downing replied that representation issues are of concern and that the Executive Committee is fixed in terms of the electoral groupings and at-large member(s), that members have staggered terms so that membership is rotated. He also pointed out that electoral groups are reviewed each year to make sure the balance of representatives is correct. The other issue, in terms of overall representation within the departments and among the electoral groupings, was not discussed as part of the amendments to the Constitution. Mr. Andrews concurred; one of the responsibilities of the Executive Committee is to review every two years the allocation of seats in the Assembly based on electoral groups and to make shifts as appropriate. The electoral groups are the same for the Senate, the Assembly and CAP, namely humanities, language and literature, math and sciences and social sciences. In terms of representation on the Executive Committee, he continued, while the language does not prohibit two people from the same department of serving, all elections for the electoral groupings take place before the at-large election and so faculty know who has been elected and can take that information to take into account. No two elected people from the same unit have served on the Executive Committee. He added that the process for amending the Constitution is not trivial, that there has been much discussion, a mail ballot requiring a majority of the College, that a high threshold has been set for this series of amendments and concluded by encouraging support of the document.

As an outsider to the process Ms. Jackson wondered if these issues had been raised previously. She also asked for clarification about what is meant by the term representation. Ms. Papazian explained that usually with a document such as a constitution one might expect that all concerns had been allayed and that is not the case in this instance. She also indicated her acceptance of Mr. Andrews' response and felt reassured about the composition of the Executive Committee. And representation in this case related to the College's broad subject groupings. Mr. Andrews remarked that concerns about representation or departmental groupings should be brought to the Executive Committee, noting that the Constitution has been amended in the past and will be in the future; the appropriate venue for further changes is the Executive Committee. Mr. Garfinkle noted that we seem to be getting into a discussion of further changes to the document and that the debate should rather center on the existing document.

Mr. Downing had a quick comment-- moving departments within electoral groupings is a possibility but that would be more of a macro move and a means of changing the proportions of faculty elected from each of the categories. What is already in the Constitution is a mechanism for fine tuning the representation.

Ms. Briggs-Bunting noted that there was a lot of discussion about separating the substantive and non-substantive changes. The non-substantive changes were primarily updating of language and titles. One of the substantive changes, the selection of chairpersons, brought forth objections from the chairs relating to the role of chairs in the selection and the possible impact on non-tenured faculty. Mr. Moran replied that all the objections were addressed in the Assembly and that the chairs' concerns were not reflected by the faculty as a whole. Mr. Andrews noted that the process for amending the Constitution involved approval first by the Assembly and then by the College through a mail vote; the concerns of the chairs were only one of many other concerns raised. Ms. Briggs-Bunting pointed out that the concerns were substantive enough for Mr. Sevilla to write an accompanying memo stating a 'sense of the Assembly', that the two defenders of this Constitution are also its drafters, and that a memo proposing term limits for the Executive Committee seems to have disappeared. Mr. Sevilla explained that the 'sense of the Assembly' was to foster understanding and to allay fears that the prerogatives of the Dean were being taken away. In response to Ms. Jackson's question as to what the objectors wished the Senate to do with the document, Ms. Papazian replied that she simply wanted clarification over representation of the Executive Committee. However, Ms. Briggs-Bunting urged the Senate to return the Constitution to the College so that the questions of representation could be addressed, for example, so that sciences faculty would not be selecting the humanities representatives. Pointing to a long tradition of collegiality, of trusting one another and voting in each other areas, Mr. Sevilla stated that he would not like to see any division in the College. Following Ms. Benson's expression of appreciation for all the comments, the motion was voted upon and approved.

Master of Accounting

The second item of old business, to establish a program leading to a Master of Accounting degree, was approved without any further discussion.

Master of Science in Software Engineering

Moving on to new business items. Mr. Dalhgren moved that the Senate recommend to the Board and the President the establishment of a program leading to a Master of Science in Software Engineering. Following Mr. Andrews' second, Ms. Jackson led off the discussion by expressing her desire to see specific language relating to minority recruitment. Mr. Polis directed her attention to pp. 4-5 of the document. However, Ms. Jackson felt that more specific language was needed for student and faculty minority recruitment endeavors. Ms. Slywka commented that SPRC had been impressed with how well the document was put together. Having examined the Graduate Catalog with regard to the requirements for a master's in computer science, Mr. Garfinkle wondered why a special program in software engineering was needed, since students could already take most of the classes. Mr. Polis responded that it is a question of emphasis and market. Industry wants individuals especially trained for software engineering and this program addresses this need by refocusing and regrouping selected courses. Also by offering this program, enrollments are expected to grow. Mr. Caradonna asked if it is expected that the program will become more distinctive as time goes on. Replying that there is already a significant difference, Mr. Polis added that having the software engineering program will mean that certain courses will be offered more frequently. Mr. Ganesan added that the computer science program is more general and that software engineering will focus on

the development and maintenance of software, on writing specifications and implementing programs.

In reply to Mr. Liboff's query regarding the thesis option, Mr. Ganesan answered that students have the option of either writing a thesis (8 credits) or not, substituting course work for the thesis credits. Mr. Liboff observed that it seems odd that students would not be asked to perform some practical projects; given the fact that we are training them for industry, it would make sense to have them work on projects that would provide them with relevant hands-on experience. Mr. Haskell pointed out that there is a 490 projects course that most students take which is practical in nature and that, in addition, many of the courses have built-in projects. Mr. Polis added that the program is targeted toward individuals already in industry who are currently doing software engineering and that the program is designed to provide them with a more theoretical basis. Mr. Ganesan pointed out that the courses CSE 580 and 541 on p. 7 address the need for hands-on project experience.

The library budget seemed rather low to Mr. Moran and he questioned those figures, noting in passing that it seems we don't support graduate program to the extent that we should. In response Mr. Polis stated that substantial funding increases have already been made to computer science in the last few years, the result of a recent accreditation review that indicated various inadequacies in the collection. That may be why these figures look low. Mr. Ganesan drew Senators' attention to the memo on p. 28 prepared by the Library Coordinator, detailing budget needs for library materials. There being no further discussion forthcoming, Mr. Russi declared the proposal to be moved to second reading.

Ph.D. in Applied Mathematical Sciences

The final new business item was again presented by Mr. Dahlgren, on behalf of the Graduate Council. He moved that the Senate recommend to the President and the Board the establishment of a program leading to a Doctor of Philosophy degree in Applied Mathematical Sciences, seconded quickly by Mr. Downing. Mr. Downing introduced the program, noting that it has been in preparation for a long time, that various aspects of the strategic plan were taken into consideration in its design, both expanding graduate education and the intent to reach out to industry and to develop collaborative programs. Mr. Kheir expressed concern over the electives mentioned on p. 10-11 and wondered why there was no clear designation for them. Mr. McKay replied that he sought ideas from various units and hopes to have this finalized before the program is instituted. Mr. Liboff finds the program a good idea, noting that it will enrich the institution and adding that where faculty are research oriented it makes sense to develop graduate programs. Ms. Jackson spoke in favor of the program. Making no apology for her personal interest in the recruitment and retention of minorities, she commended the Math. Dept. for their planned summer math camps. And added, that for those who do research, she likes the idea of having a large group of people available to explain statistics. Mr. McKay reported on the receipt of 46 letters supporting the program and distributed to the Senate a selection from them. Hearing no further discussion, Mr. Russi declared the proposal moved to second reading and called for any good and welfare items. None were forthcoming and the usual motion to adjourn was made followed by a general exodus at 4:00 p.m.

Submitted by,
Linda L. Hildebrand
Secretary to the University Senate

Back to

OAKLAND UNIVERSITY

S E N A T E

Home Page