

Oakland University Senate  
November 11, 2010  
Minutes

**Members present:** Awbrey, Bednarski, Berven, D., Berven, K., Connery, Doman, Dulio, Eis, Folberg, Graetz, Grimm, Grossman, Izraeli, Jackson, Jhashi, Kruk, Latcha, Leibert, LeMarbe, Licker, Mabee, Marks, Meehan, Mitton, Pedroni, Penprase, Piskulich, Polis, Russell, Schartman, Southward, Spagnuolo, Tardella, Tracy, Voelck, Walters, Wells, Williams, Wood

**Members absent:** Chamra, Free, Frick, Gallien, Giblin, Gilson, Guessous, Hightower, Kim, Moran, Schott-Baer, Schweitzer, Shablin, Sudol

**Summary of Actions:**

**1. Informational Items**

*Retention Report—Susan Awbrey*

*Retention Report—Laura Schartman*

*Graduate Certificate in Biomedical Sciences—Doug Wendell*

**2. Unfinished Business:** *Motion from the Oakland University William Beaumont School of Medicine to approve the revision of the Constitution.*

**3. New Business:** *Procedural motion to staff Senate standing committees*

*Academic Conduct, Assessment, General Education, Library, Research*

Provost Moudgil called the meeting to order at 3:15 P.M.

**A. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

***Retention Report***

Susan Awbrey (Senior Associate Provost) provided a retention update of which the following are highlights. (For more complete data, click on this [link](#).) Ms. Awbrey pointed out that there is a significant budgetary impact of retention because if OU were to retain 5% more students, this would amount to an added \$3,400,000 of revenue. Six-year graduation rates are at 39.7%, which is below the national average. There are two sources of poor retention: the type of students at OU, and student engagement. The percent of new students entering with a 3.0 GPA or better has gone up, as has the percent of incoming FTIACS with 3.0 or better. The first year retention is higher for students with higher GPAs. OU is in the middle of the pack as far as ACT scores are concerned, with ACT scores of 22. We need to do more than just change admissions requirements in order to improve retention statistics. We need to pay attention to support needs of students. The University Student Retention Committee has looked at various barriers to retention, such as institutional barriers, faculty barriers and student barriers. Once the Retention Committee figures out which barriers are the most important, the committee will begin to talk to various groups to see how retention can be improved.

***Retention Report***

Laura Schartman (Director Institutional Research) provided a [retention report](#) as well, of which the following are highlights. The recent first year retention rate at OU was approximately 75%. Roughly 27% of students did not return overall. 40% of minority students did not return. Minority FTIACs are graduating at a much lower percentage than the overall student

population. Oakland University's 6-year graduation rate averaged 43-44% until 2005, but since then it has gone down. Graduation rate by race shows disparities between white and minority students. The graduation rate for the best students is at 64%, as compared to 74-75% at MSU. Preparation is not the only piece of this picture. Research has shown that students should attend the most selective institution which they can attend because they will be more likely to graduate if they do.

There are universities that have closed the gap on retention rates and so it is possible to do so, and it has been shown that focus on retention does lead to improvement. Focus on student success has to be collaborative and coordinated, it has to have high expectations and there needs to be a clear path to success. Institutions need to pay attention to data on retention and use it. The most important thing for retention is to ask more of students, not less. Ms. Schartman indicated that there needs to be a focus on teaching excellence. Faculty members should be accessible and responsive.

Senate members were provided with a handout referring to selections from recent articles and reports intended to put the discussion of OU graduation rates within a context of the public discussion regarding universities and graduate rates, to include the following: *Detroit Free Press*, October 24, 2010, Report: 'Horrendous' black-white gap at Wayne State; The Education Trust, [www.collegeresults.org](http://www.collegeresults.org), August 2010: 'Big Gaps, Small Gaps: Some Colleges and Universities Do Better Than Others in Graduating African-American Students'; *Chronicle of Higher Education*, August 9, 2010: 'What's the Matter with Wayne State?'; Bowen, William, Matthew Chingos and Michael-McPherson, *Crossing the Finish Line: Completing College at America's Universities*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009.

Following Ms. Schartman's report, Ms. Jackson said that this was one of the best informational items she has seen, and she hopes it will be a call to action. She said the report should be responded to in the Steering Committee and in a plan of action by the university. Mr. Moudgil agreed.

### ***Graduate Certificate in Biomedical Sciences***

Doug Wendell (Biology) explained that the reason for the creation of a [graduate certificate in Biomedical Sciences](#) was that existing programs were more than some students were looking for. So they created the certificate, which is 16 credits at the graduate level, designed to improve chances of students to get into professional schools. He noted that all of the courses can be applied to the Master's degree if a student should decide to move in that direction instead.

## **B. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES of October 14, 2010**

The [minutes of the October 14, 2010](#) were approved (motion by Ms. Jackson, second by Mr. Doman).

Mr. Grossman noted that concerning the 'Degree in Three' program, despite what the Senate had been told at the previous meeting, the CAS did not vote on it but rather was informed as an informational item.

## **C. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

Motion from the Oakland University William Beaumont School of Medicine to approve the revision of the Constitution (Mr. Meehan):

**Moved** that the Senate recommend to the President and the Board of Trustees approval of the revisions to the Constitution of the Oakland University William Beaumont School of Medicine.

First reading: Debatable, but not eligible for final vote at this meeting. Steering protocol holds constitutions to be unamendable from the floor. If revisions seem to be needed, the document will be referred to the authors for reconsideration.

Supporting Materials: [Constitution of the Oakland University William Beaumont School of Medicine](#). [Bylaws of the Faculty of the Oakland University William Beaumont School of Medicine](#).

Mary Bee (Assoc Prof Biomedical Sciences, SOM) explained that this is a resubmission of the OUWBSOM constitution. She acknowledged and thanked the *Ad Hoc* committee that had worked on this document which was approved on Monday, November 1, 2010 by the SOM. She said that faculty from the SOM had first and foremost addressed the issues that had been brought up at the May 2010 Senate meeting when the constitution was discussed, and she thanked the Senate for its input.

Ms. Jhashi asked how and why the School of Business Administration was chosen as a point of comparison concerning representation in the Senate? Ms. Bee said that they had chosen a School of a middle-size to compare with the SOM, so that the SOM would be appropriately represented, but would not take over the Senate. Ms. Jhashi questioned whether this reference is necessary in the constitution. Mr. Moudgil pointed out that to eliminate the possibility of there being too many members from the SOM in the Senate, they had used the School of Business Administration as a reference point. Mr. Polis asked what is the total number of faculty in the SOM? Ms. Bee replied that there are six biomedical faculty members, aiming for 19, but there are 700 clinicians. Mr. Grimm said that Article 2B of their constitution defines clinicians as faculty members, but in the Bylaws defining a quorum (A4), the terms clinical and non-clinical are used, and this seems to be a disagreement in definitions. Ms. Bee said that the title is the same, but they are found at both of the institutions. Mr. Tracy said that he understands why they referred to the School of Business in their constitution, but finds the reference peculiar. He said that it would be better to use a percentage. For instance, it could say that representation would be 8% of the Senate, instead of making reference to a particular school. Ms. Jackson said there will be a committee to review the constitution, and perhaps they would recommend this change to the wording regarding representation from the SOM on the Senate. She understands why the reference is there, but she pointed out that if the Senate composition changes, this would change the constitution of the SOM. So it is an issue that should be addressed.

## **D. NEW BUSINESS**

### ***1. Procedural motion to staff Senate standing committees:***

**Moved** that the persons listed below be appointed to the committees designated (motion by Ms. Jackson, second by Piskulich):

**ACADEMIC CONDUCT—Sunwoo Shin (SEHS)**  
**ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE—Tanya Crist (SEHS)**  
**GENERAL EDUCATION—Kevin Lamm (English - CAS), Dave Downing**  
**(Math/Stat - CAS), Ron Tracy (SBA), Eileen Johnson (SEHS)**  
**LIBRARY COMMITTEE—Shannon Flummerfelt (SEHS)**  
**RESEARCH COMMITTEE—Brian Tabor (SEHS), Jeff Insko (English - CAS)**

Jay Meehan said Sally Tardella (CAS) had recently come forward as a volunteer for the Assessment Committee as well, and her name was added to the above list.

The motion was passed unanimously.

***2. Procedural motion to approve Graduation Lists reviewed and submitted by units (Mr. Grimm)***

**Moved** that the Graduation Lists reviewed and submitted by the academic units of Oakland University be approved as submitted.

Mr. Grimm withdrew the motion because he had since found out that these lists are supposed to be approved by the Senate Steering Committee, not by the Senate.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Dikka Berven

posted 11/30/10  
updated 12/1/10