



# OAKLAND UNIVERSITY SENATE

## Oakland University Senate

Seventh Meeting  
April 10, 2003

### *Minutes*

Members Present: Alber, Bazaz, D. Berven, Clark, Coppin, Downing, Eberly, Eberwein, Etienne, Gardner, Goldberg, Graves, Grossman, Hansen-Smith, Haskell, Hildebrand, Jarski, Kamil, Khapoya, Latcha, Mabee, Machmut-Jhasi, Mann, Metzler, Moudgil, Mukherji, Osthaus, Otto, Papazian, Polis, Porter, Rozek, Russell, Schmidt, Schott-Baer, Schwartz, Schweitzer, Sen, Sethi, Sieloff, Smith, Vincent, Willoughby

Members Absent: Aubry, Bertocci, K. Berven, Didier, Frick, Giblin, Haddad, Hansen, Henke, Klemanski, LeMarbe, Long, McNair, Olson, Surrey, Tomina, Zingo

#### Summary of actions:

1. Information Items: First Year Advising Center - Ms. Snyder; Senate meetings for 2003-2004.
2. Roll call. Approval of March Minutes (Mr. Latcha, Ms. Papazian) Approved.
3. Motion as amended on mid-semester evaluations for students in 100-and 200-level courses. (Ms. Mukherji, Mr. Latcha) 2d reading. Approved.
- 3a. Amended motion regarding mid-semester evaluations. (Mr. Graves, Mr. Grossman) Approved.
4. Motion from the Steering Committee to accept the report of the General Education Task Force II and to direct the Task Force to develop a proposal for a revised General Education Program. (Mr. Graves, Mr. Downing) Approved following approval of a motion (Ms. Schott-Baer, Mr. Graves) to waive the second reading.
5. Motion from the Steering Committee to change the names of some Senate Committees. (Ms. Schott-Baer, Mr. Schwartz) Approved following a motion (Mr. Downing, Mr. Willoughby) to waive the second reading.
6. Motion from the Steering Committee to change the chairmanship of the Academic Conduct Committee. (Mr. Coppin, Ms. Schott-Baer) First reading
7. Procedural motion from the Steering Committee to staff Senate standing committees (Mr. Schwartz, Mr. Khapoya) Approved.
8. Resolution endorsing Core Function of Oakland University (Mr. Russell, Mr. Downing) Approved.
9. Report on the Provost Survey (Mr. Graves) Motion to transmit survey data to President. (Mr. Polis, Ms. Hansen-Smith) Approved.

The meeting was called to order at 3:14 p.m. The Provost opened with an appreciative tribute to the secretary, Ms. Hildebrand, who will not be returning to the Senate in the fall. A lovely bouquet of roses was presented to her and attention was called to a celebratory cake to be

enjoyed at the end of the meeting. Ms. Hildebrand expressed her appreciation to the Provost and Senators for their support and patience, commenting that it had been an enjoyable learning experience, especially the opportunity to work with seven different provosts over her ten year span as secretary.

The Provost then called on the Dean of Student Affairs, Ms. Snyder who then shared with the Senate an idea for a First Year Advising Center. OU's retention rates are not what we would like and the idea behind the center is that advising is the key for first year retention. The center would provide first year advising and programs to provide students with needed support services. The plan includes an addition to North Foundation which would include the Advising Center and also Career Services which is now housed in Vandenberg Hall. Funding is needed for this enterprise so right now it is just an idea but she indicated she would welcome any comments or suggestions concerning this.

Mr. Moudgil then called attention to the list of Senate meetings for the next year and announced the possibility of an additional Senate meeting on April 24 this year if there were any Senate business that still needed to be transacted this academic year.

The secretary then proceeded with the roll call after which the *Minutes* of the March 13th meeting were approved. (Moved Mr. Latcha, Seconded, Ms. Papazian)

#### Campus trails

Mr. Russell followed up on the mention in the minutes concerning the south campus trail system, noting that the trails that were originally planned are **not** the trails that were included in the announcement at the previous Senate meeting. He summarized the history behind the trails:

1. The golf course architects propose series of hiking/jogging trails for the golf course area of south campus; these plans were presented by Vice President Schaefer and Dean Downing at open meeting on golf course.
2. The Senate sets up an *ad hoc* committee to investigate proposed trails. The Committee walks trails and recommends they are a satisfactory replacement to the current trails. Committee recommends the trails be left as ?natural? as possible and well marked.
3. Administration announces in winter 2003 trails are in place and marked.
4. Comparison of trails by golf course architects and those on latest map are considerably different--entrances have been eliminated and the system has been shortened. He displayed [comparative maps](#) so the Senate could view the discrepancies and the extent of the changes.

#### Mid-Semester evaluations

The first item of old business was a motion from the Steering Committee on mid-semester evaluations for students in 100- and 200-level courses, originally moved by Ms. Mukherji, seconded by Mr. Latcha.

MOVED that instructors of 100- and 200-level courses give each registered student an indication of satisfactory or unsatisfactory mid-semester progress by means of the electronic grading system.

Mr. Polis opened the discussion by asking for reassurance that all faculty would have to do is put in a U for students who were not performing satisfactorily. Mr. Clark confirmed that is all that would be required by this new policy. That led to a concern that the motion as stated requires instructors to provide S's and U's. Ms. Eberly asked how one decides what is a U or an S; should there be a university policy specifying either 1.0 or 2.0 as satisfactory. Mr. Clark responded that some courses require more than a 2.0 to be considered satisfactory (for a major in the field) so a university policy won't always work. He felt it best to be left to the individual professor to determine what is satisfactory for their course. Ms. Schott-Baer concurred that faculty should be the ones to decide. Ms. Gilroy stated that university policy already specifies 2.0 as satisfactory. Mr. Graves noted that the purpose of this policy is to provide students with assistance, to intervene and try to keep students off probation. Mr. Russell wondered about liability; if he fails to give a student a U and the student then fails the course, is he liable? Mr. Clark responded that a disclaimer will be published that will state that, if you don't get a U grade, it doesn't necessarily guarantee success in the class. He added that as long as we have documentation about the grades students earned, we would be all right. Mr. Gardner noted that in project-centered classes it isn't reasonable to give students a U grade and wondered if there's a penalty for faculty who do not comply? Mr. Moudgil opined that he hoped that we wouldn't get involved with tracking faculty compliance but that he hoped faculty would be responsible and cognizant of what is good and helpful for the students in their classes. Mr. Tracy thought it a problem that failing at OU is a 0.0 and that for a lot of courses 1.0 is passing. Mr. Graves then proposed an substitute motion; Mr. Grossman provided the second:

**MOVED** that instructors of 100- and 200- level courses give each registered student who is making unsatisfactory mid-semester progress an unsatisfactory mid-semester progress report by means of the electronic grading system.

Mr. Gardner noted that this proposal is going to affect part-time faculty the most since they are the ones who teach most of the 100 and 200 level classes; deans will need to make sure they are aware of this policy. Ms. Lombardo, chair of UCUI, read a [statement from UCUI](#) indicating that their concerns have been addressed. Mr. Grossman and Mr. Moudgil both agreed that it was worth giving a try. Mr. Clark noted that any student getting a U will get an email notice about the U grade and will be encouraged to talk to the instructor and to seek help to pass the class. The substitute motion was then approved with a few nays [Gardner, Goldberg, Hansen, Khapoya, Schmidt, Sen] and one abstention, Mr. Coppin.

### General Education

The Provost opened the discussion by thanking everyone who has participated in the process of revising the general education guidelines. He then recognized Mr. Graves who:

**MOVED** that the Senate accept the report of the General Education Task Force II and direct the Task Force to develop a proposal for a revised General Education program by December 15, 2003, for review during the Winter semester of 2004.

Following Mr. Downing's second, Mr. Grossman asked for clarification of what is meant by the "report"; is it the one-page [framework](#) and the draft [philosophy statement](#)? That's it, confirmed Ms. Awbrey. Mr. Grossman suggested, for clarity purposes, that the titles of these documents replace the word "report" in the motion, a suggestion that was agreeable to the mover and seconder of the motion. Needing clarification, Ms. Papazian asked if the Senate is being asked to agree to the framework so that the Task Force II can continue to work during

the summer and develop a program to be reviewed by the Senate next year; the Provost answered yes. Mr. Downing commended the Task Force, noting that many concerns expressed by the College were heeded and are addressed in the framework. Ms. Piskulich encouraged feedback concerning the philosophy statement, pointing out that this is the first time many have seen it.

Ms. Schott-Baer, seconded by Mr. Graves moved to waive the second reading. That motion was approved unanimously and the main motion was finally approved [Nays: Russell; Abstention: Hansen-Smith]:

**MOVED** that the Senate accept the framework and draft philosophy statement of the General Education Task Force II and direct the Task Force to develop a proposal for a revised General Education program by December 15, 2003, for review during the Winter semester of 2004.

#### Senate Committee name changes

A motion from the Steering Committee to change the names of the Committees listed below was moved by Ms. Schott-Baer and seconded by Mr. Schwartz. There being no discussion, Mr. Downing, seconded by Mr. Willoughby, moved to waive the second reading. That motion was approved with the requisite 3/4 majority and the main motion was then approved unanimously:

**MOVED** that the names of the following committees be changed:

Committee on Human Relations to Human Relations Committee  
 Senate Athletics Committee to Athletics Committee  
 Senate Budget Review Committee to Budget Review Committee  
 Senate Library Committee to Library Committee  
 Senate Planning Review Committee to Planning Review Committee  
 University Committee on Assessment to Assessment Committee

#### Academic Conduct Committee chair selection

The next item of business was a motion from the Steering Committee to change the chairmanship of the Academic Conduct Committee, moved by Mr. Coppin and seconded by Ms. Schott-Baer:

**MOVED** that the Academic Conduct Committee have one chair instead of two co-chairs.

Mr. Latcha commented that the comment in today's the agenda is incorrect, that the **original intent**<sup>1</sup> was to have the co-chairs each serve as chair for one semester and thus split the workload. A motion to waive the second reading died for lack of a second, with Mr. Gardner noting that more information is needed if the information provided by Mr. Latcha is correct. He asked what the by-laws of the Academic Conduct Committee specify? Mr. Grossman commented that nothing in the charge to the Committee says the chair has to preside at all hearings, adding that the Committee could decide how to handle this. Mr. Coppin added that if the chair is ill you can't postpone a hearing and indicated that one should be able to find someone from the committee to preside. The motion was in its first reading and will be held over for second reading (and further information ) at the September Senate meeting.

### Senate Standing Committees staffing

The traditional April Senate motion to staff Senate standing committees was moved by Mr. Schwartz, seconded by Mr. Khapoya. Mr. Grossman asked about the chair of the Academic Conduct Committee; should two be specified since the previous motion was not yet approved. Mr. Latcha indicated that as long as someone was in place for the fall term, the committee would be able to function. With no further ado, the Senate approved the motion unanimously.

### Good and Welfare:

Mr. Goslin opened the good and welfare portion of the meeting by reporting that President Russi had requested that the Committee look at the values being employed in the current budget reduction process. The Committee compiled a list of the "[Core Functions of the University](#)" and is asking the Senate to endorse the list. Mr. Russell, seconded by Mr. Downing, moved that:

**Whereas** budget reductions at Oakland University appear to be inevitable, and, **Whereas** protection of the core functions of Oakland University should be uppermost in our thinking as we plan for, and implement budget reductions, **Move** that Senate endorse the Senate Planning Review Committee's list of Core Functions of Oakland University (3/17/03) which reflect the University's strong academic values.

### **Core Functions of Oakland University**

The Senate Planning Review Committee strongly recommends that all budget adjustment decisions should be based on the principle of protection of the core functions of Oakland University as enumerated below. Major categories are in priority order, and items within each major category are in priority order.

#### 1. Provision of High Quality Education

- High quality undergraduate education with a strong liberal arts component for all
- High quality focused graduate education
- Attraction, retention, and support of a diverse population of high quality students
- Attraction, retention, and support of a diverse population of high quality faculty
- Provision of adequate facilities, technology, equipment, and personnel to support high quality education
- Provision of a supportive environment for the community of active scholars on campus which encourages scholarship, research and the production of new knowledge

#### 2. Provision of Specific Student Support Services

- Academic and career advising
- Tutoring/academic support
- Retention initiatives including COM 101 and Peer mentoring
- Financial aid
- Provision of leadership development opportunities
- Provision of student growth and development initiatives

#### 3. Campus Environment

- Enhance the scholarly environment with support for faculty and student research and scholarship

- Campus life programs encouraging open exchange of ideas

#### 4. Community and Professional Partnerships and Service

- Support collaborative efforts with community and professional partners
- Support continuing education
- Build relationships and cultivate friends
- Disseminate information about OU activities and accomplishments [Senate Planning Review Committee, 3/17/03]

The motion was approved. Mr. Russell stated that the Committee had met with the President and been told that the President will use these guidelines.

#### Provost Review

The Provost then excused himself and Mr. Graves assumed the chair. He reported on the results of the survey concerning the Provost and asked the Senate what do we want to do now. In response to Mr. Polis's query, Mr. Graves stated that approximately 1/3 of the 430 faculty responded to the survey, with some of them commenting on the methodology (they didn't want to check boxes) and some sending written comments. Mr. Graves wondered if the Senate wished to make a recommendation or simply to pass the information on. Ms. Eberwein replied that she can't remember the Senate ever making a specific recommendation concerning reappointment or appointment to the office of the provost and suggested that we follow our precedent and simply submit the information. Mr. Polis, seconded by Ms. Hansen then:

**MOVED** that we transmit this information gathered in the survey to the President as an information item without comment.

Mr. Khapoya noted that whatever we decide or say, the Senate is, after all, advisory only. The President and Board can appoint or reappoint whoever they please. Mr. Coppin asked if the comments should also be passed along. Mr. Graves thought the best way to handle this is to respond to those individuals and suggest that they communicate directly with Mr. Russi if they so choose. Mr. Graves indicated that Mr. Russi is open to input and that anyone can e-mail him with their thoughts. Mr. Downing agreed that the President is interested in as much information as possible; he added that since this context involves primarily faculty input, he would abstain from voting on this motion. The motion was then voted upon and approved with Mr. Downing abstaining.

Upon motion duly seconded and sustained without opposition, this the final meeting of the 2002-2003 Senate session and this the final meeting of the 2001-2003 Senate term was adjourned at 5:10 p.m.

Submitted by:  
Linda L. Hildebrand  
Secretary to the University Senate  
9/16/03

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## **University Committee on Undergraduate Instruction**

Response to the Mid-Semester Evaluation Proposal

April 10, 2003

The University Committee on Undergraduate Instruction (UCUI) recently reviewed the mid-semester evaluation proposal as part of its charge to "recommend to the University Senate academic policies and procedures concerning undergraduate education." This review included discussions with Charles Clark, Director of the Academic Skills Center.

UCUI believes that the current proposal is a worthwhile effort to improve the university's retention of new students. Many of these students must learn to navigate an academic environment that is very different from those they may have faced previously. The timing of the evaluation process—by the seventh week of the fall and winter semesters—gives students more time to improve their performance before the end of the withdrawal period. In addition, the broadness of the proposal provides instructors the latitude to define satisfactory or unsatisfactory progress within their own courses.

UCUI acknowledges that this proposal will require some effort for faculty who teach 100- and 200-level courses. However, it is our understanding that this extra work has been minimized, as faculty will be required to submit only unsatisfactory evaluations in the electronic grading system, rather than an evaluation for every student enrolled in their 100- and 200-level courses.

UCUI does have some concerns that we hope will be addressed when the proposal is implemented:

**Students' interpretation of unsatisfactory evaluations:** UCUI is concerned that some students will interpret their unsatisfactory evaluations as a grade, and subsequently withdraw from a course without discussing their progress with instructors. It is our understanding that students who receive an e-mail regarding their unsatisfactory mid-semester progress will also be advised to contact their instructors, as well as other appropriate offices on campus, for assistance. UCUI strongly supports this effort to encourage students to interpret these mid-semester indicators as an evaluation of their progress, and to emphasize the support that is available to them.

**The inclusion of upper-class students in the evaluation process:** Under the current proposal, upper-class students who enroll in 100- and 200-level courses would be included in the overall pool of students for whom mid-semester evaluations will apply. UCUI would like to see these students weeded out of the process in some way, preferably through the electronic grading system rather than through additional work on the part of faculty.

**Evaluation of the proposal:** We encourage the Academic Skills Center and other appropriate offices to gather data to evaluate the success of this proposal in retaining and supporting new students.

UCUI agrees with the Senate Academic Standing and Honors Committee that this proposal may not help every student. However, it may help some, particularly those students who are unaware of the academic support services and resources that are available to them.

svl 4/10/2003

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<sup>1</sup>Academic Conduct Committee: Second, the appointment of co-chairs is intended to allow the burden of this office to be shared. Current language is silent on the designation of the chair, and history and custom have led to its falling upon one individual. With the increasing number and complexity of cases in recent years, this role has become additionally demanding. The midyear resignation of the 1993/94 chair illustrates the unhappy consequences of placing the entire burden on one person. It is envisioned that the two co-chairs will divide the work of the year between them in an equitable and mutually agreeable fashion. This language will formalize an arrangement that the Steering Committee has made for the upcoming year when Prof. Fish and Prof. Latcha will share the office. Members of the Academic Conduct Committee hope that these modest reforms will enable it to better fulfill its important mission. Senate [Agenda 9/22/94](#))

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