

Oakland University Senate

Sixth Meeting
March 11, 1999

Minutes

Members present: Abraham, Alber, K.Andrews, S. Andrews, Bertocci, Blume, Boddy, Brieger, Buffard-O'Shea, Connellan, David, Dillon, Doane, Downing, Eberwein, Gardner, Grossman, Herold, Hildebrand, Hovanesian, Johnson, Keane, Liboff, Lilliston, Long, Mabee, Macauley, McNair, Moore, Moran, Mukherji, Olson, Osthaus, Otto, Polis, Reynolds, Riley, Rozek, Schochetman, Sen, Sieloff, Speer, Sudol, Wood; Russi

Members absent: Benson, Blanks, Haskell, Herman, Jarski, Lombard, Mitchell, Moudgil, Ott, Papazian, Pettengill, H. Schwartz, R. Schwartz, Simon, Weng

Summary of actions.

1. Motion to approve the minutes of February 18. (Mr. Connellan, Ms. Alber) Approved with correction.
2. Information items
 - a. North Central Accreditation report
 - b. Master Planning process update
3. Discussion item
 - a. Enrollment scenarios
4. Motion to postpone indefinitely the consideration of the Resolution to create an ad hoc Constitutional Amendment Committee. (Ms. Moore, Ms. Buffard-O'Shea) Approved.
5. Motion to endorse the joint report of SPRC-SBRC concerning the Creating the Future Initiative. (Mr. Dillon, Mr. Moran) First reading.
6. Motion to amend the Senate Constitution. (Mr. Andrews, Ms. Buffard-O'Shea) First reading.
7. Motion to hold an open hearing on the proposed amendments to the Senate Constitution prior to the second reading. (Mr. Grossman, Mr. Bertocci) Approved.

Mr. Downing called the sixth meeting of the Oakland University Senate to order at 3:15 and began by thanking Mr. Andrews for stepping in and chairing the February meeting for him. Mr. Connellan moved and Ms. Alber seconded a motion to approve the minutes of the February 18th meeting. Mr. Riley, who was listed as present at the meeting, asked that they be corrected since he was not there. With that correction noted, the Senate approved the minutes.

North Central accreditation.

Turning to the information items, Mr. Downing reported that the exit interview with the North Central Accreditation team was positive and productive, and that the team expressed their appreciation for the work and the effort that went into the self study. The formal report of the team will be submitted later this spring. The University will be reaccredited but there will be a focussed visit in five years to look at the general education and assessment areas. Mr. Downing thanked all those who contributed to the report, and in particular Ms.Awbrey and Ms. Papazian.

Master Planning Process

Mr. Downing reported on the development of the master planning process and noted that Ms.

Schaefer had consulted widely in its development. Mr. Dillon, chair of the Senate Planning Review Committee, indicated that they had reviewed the document and provided input in the process through their [report](#).

Enrollment

Mr. Downing then presented a [report](#) on various enrollment scenarios he had prepared for a Board of Trustees retreat. The report was to acquaint the Board with issues that will be facing the campus in the future and looked specifically at the student body and the implications for different mixes of students, for example, variables such as the size of enrollments, slow versus fast growth, the mix of graduate and undergraduate students, full time versus part-time students, retention, non-traditional vs. traditional delivery of credits, continuing education, and distance learning. The purpose was not to make any decisions but to take a look at the impact of various changes in the mix and to acquaint the Board with the repercussions different decisions would have, particularly with regard to faculty, instructional and residential space, and support systems.

Mr. Liboff asked if there will be a need for additional dorm space. Mr. Downing responded that the greatest impact will be on instructional space and faculty. What are other institutions doing, asked Mr. Liboff; if they are also planning on growing, there will be greater competition for students. Mr. Downing commented that WMU is focusing on the development of graduate Ph.D programs and GVSU is using continuing education programs to increase their numbers of FYES. Mr. Keane asked what are the imperatives involved here; do we want to add more programs, will we be lowering standards? Mr. Downing indicated that there would be more focus on marketing in both the primary and secondary markets and also we would be looking at new degree programs, especially at the graduate level. As for lowering standards, he noted that new students' scores are increasing so there is no sense that we will have to lower standards in order to achieve growth. Mr. Grossman pointed out that no distinction is being made between part-time and full time faculty, and that there are currently not enough full-time faculty, a trend that needs to be reversed. In reply to Mr. Bertocci's question as to why develop the various scenarios, Mr. Downing answered that it provided a way of looking at historic trends and demographic data and tweaking the numbers to see the implications of various options. Any decisions about growth will also have repercussions on the master plan, in particular the buildings and the use of land. Mr. Downing concluded by thanking Ms. Schartman, Mr. Johnson and Mr. Connellan for their assistance in putting together the information in the report.

Resolution to Establish an Ad Hoc Constitutional Amendment Committee

Turning to the one item of old business, Mr. Downing recognized Ms. Moore who had introduced the motion to establish an Ad Hoc Constitutional Amendment Committee. Ms. Moore stated that the timeliness of the motion has passed and moved to indefinitely postpone consideration of this motion. Following Ms. Buffard-O'Shea's second, the parliamentarian, Mr. Andrews, stated that to indefinitely postpone is the equivalent of withdrawing the motion. Ms. Eberwein asked if the motion was being postponed to allow time for more information to be gathered and more discussion to take place. Ms. Moore responded that there is a desire to move forward on this proposal this semester and, since Mr. Bertocci pointed out at the last meeting that a motion to amend the Constitution could be submitted at any time, the need for an ad hoc committee seemed superfluous. Mr. Grossman pointed out that the petition that was circulated around campus called for this ad hoc committee and that at the last meeting a strong argument was made that we should honor the petition. The petition dealt primarily with the establishment of a faculty senate, stated Mr. Andrews and added that a motion to be

introduced later in the Good and Welfare portion of this meeting will address that issue. He indicated that those who supported the petition want to move forward expeditiously and intend for the new motion which deals with amending the Constitution to receive its first reading today. The second reading will be at the April Senate meeting. This is to allow full and timely consideration of the issue. If a quorum had not been called for at the last meeting, a relatively rare occurrence, the ad hoc committee would have been formed and would have reported back to the Senate at this meeting. He felt also that the discussion at the last meeting was substantive and spoke in favor of the motion to postpone. Ms. Buffard O'Shea stressed the fact that faculty signed the petition in favor of a faculty senate and not any alternatives.

Mr. Grossman pointed out that the new motion to amend the Senate still does not create an all faculty body and expressed concern that the amendments were drafted without campus-wide input. He felt that we are trying to move too fast and that it would make sense to have a committee study the issue. Mr. Andrews stated that the drafters are prepared to deal with any objections to the amendments when they are proposed and felt that the process of two readings plus an open hearing would provide the campus with sufficient opportunity for input. The motion to indefinitely postpone consideration of the motion on the floor was approved.

Creating the Future Priorities

Mr. Downing then recognized Mr. Dillon who explained that the Senate Planning and Budget Review Committees were asked to address the cross-campus, interdisciplinary issues of the Creating the Future document. They reviewed the document and identified 'megastrategies' which were then tied to selected [unit strategies](#). Copies of the [report](#) were distributed to the Senate and he moved that the Senate endorse the report. He called particular attention to the fifth paragraph of their report which deals with their concern over the absence of unit strategies relating to scholarly and creative endeavors. Following Mr. Moran's second, Mr. Downing expressed his appreciation to the Committees for their prompt and expeditious work in preparing their report. Mr. Connellan wondered why so few unit strategies were listed under the diversity megastrategy and Mr. Moran responded that they listed only the most relevant, first tier ones rather than including all of them. The School of Business Administration went through an extensive process to establish priorities, commented Mr. Gardner; and asked if their list was taken into consideration. Mr. Dillon explained that the Committees focussed primarily on broad megastrategies, that they listed selected unit strategies that were the epitome of the megastrategy; he added that they thought that many of the unit strategies could and should be implemented by the unit. Mr. Downing summarized by stating that these are priorities relative to the thematic areas that were identified by the joint Committees and not a ranking of the individual recommendations in the report.

Ms. Eberwein congratulated the Committees for coming up with an impressive and sound list of megastrategies. However, she expressed concern about the lack of parallelism among the unit strategies that are listed under the megastrategies and stated that she'd rather consider them exemplary things to do rather than as a definite list of all that we are trying to do. She wondered how we would go forward with these. Should something be added about scholarship she asked. Also we don't want to create the future at the expense of present excellence. She felt that the outside individuals who worked on this document assume that scholarship and education are the basic business of the university; that while the maintenance of excellence may be taken for granted by outsiders, she felt it might be threatened by changing university priorities. Ms. Speer's concern was that the School of Nursing priorities mentioned dealt primarily with technology, and thought that the partnerships that they are involved in and the excellence of teaching should be represented. Mr. Moran explained that these priorities are

first tier campus wide priorities, that unit priorities are still valid and worthy of being pursued. In response to Ms. Buffard O'Shea's support for specific mention of teaching and research excellence, Mr. Connellan thought that the first megastrategy, "support for the learning process" contained that concept. No additional discussion was forthcoming, so Mr. Downing noted that the motion will be considered at its second reading next week and moved on to good and welfare.

Amended Senate Constitution

Mr. Andrews, seconded by Ms. Buffard-O'Shea, moved that the Senate propose to the Faculty, the President and the Board the adoption of the [amended Senate Constitution](#).

Mr. Andrews explained that they are proceeding with the first reading of this motion to provide the opportunity for full participation in the amendment process. The goal is to give concrete form to the petition which was supported overwhelmingly by the faculty. The key changes relate to the composition of the Senate, specifically Article IV which addresses membership. Other changes involve the removal of obsolete language. It is clear, he continued, that the current composition is obsolete and does not reflect the fact that other groups on campus have constitutions and the ability to make recommendations to the Board of Trustees. The desire of the faculty to have a Senate representing them does not represent any disrespect to other units on campus. The APs have a voice through the AP Assembly, the students through the Student Congress, the Deans through the Deans Council.

As for the objection that the composition is not purely faculty, Mr. Andrews opined that this composition would operationally give faculty their voice, and is consistent with the spirit of the petition. The amending process turns it over to the faculty for approval, there will be an open hearing and a vote and those that have objections can come to the open hearing and lobby for their interests. They can, if they wish, offer amendments. He added that Article VI has been left unchanged even though the title is incorrect, noting that titles change frequently and there is no easy way to keep up to date. The amendment process is always available so if amendments are desired, they can be proposed. He concluded by stating that he doesn't think it necessary to study every conceivable permutation prior to bringing this motion forward but if someone wants to, they can.

Mr. Russell spoke of the need for a faculty senate and argued that many of the responsibilities delineated in the Constitution are clearly faculty prerogatives. He felt that the Senate as currently constituted may not represent the majority faculty opinion, or even the majority of faculty Senators, especially if faculty are divided on an issue. He added that many faculty who supported this were previous administrators; and that people reporting to the President and Board need to know what the faculty want. Finally, in the public hearings with the Provost candidates, they were asked about a faculty Senate and all stated that one was needed in order to be informed about faculty opinion. Mr. Russell argued further, that having the Provost as the presiding officer creates an inherent conflict of interest, since when issues are debated this individual is wearing two hats, one representing the faculty and one representing Academic Affairs. The Provost makes decisions on what issues should come to the Senate and can pocket veto items if he doesn't wish them to be considered. He reiterated the fact that 273 faculty signed the petition. In response to the question of why non-faculty representatives have been added, he pointed out that the Student Congress has a faculty member and that the Provost should be present since he will be responsible for presenting decisions to the administration. As for the decision to retain the name "university senate" rather than changing

it to "faculty senate", he stated the reason it wasn't changed is that it appears in other governance documents such as the Faculty Agreement

Mr. Doane stated that if that logic holds, the University Senate should include multiple constituent groups. He doesn't know how this will change anything since the faculty are the clear majority on the current Senate and have a strong voting voice. He pointed out that the deans and the provost are faculty too, and that they often teach courses. The university is not just the faculty, he argued. If we want a faculty assembly, we should call it that and fix all the related documents rather than staking out the name university senate for a single constituent group. Mr. Moran countered that other groups have their own representative bodies and the intent of the signers of the petition was to have a faculty senate. He noted that faculty do not have a vote in the AP Assembly. He stated that faculty want to assert their control over this body, that only the faculty have the right to change the Senate Constitution. He opined that this proposal reflects the general discontent among the faculty and also averred that there have been any number of votes where the faculty felt one way and the Senate, because of the administrators, voted differently on the issue.

Mr. Dillon asked for specific instances of this and Mr. Moran stated that the proposal to establish a university-wide dean's list was one example. The faculty wanted it relegated to the schools but the Deans wanted it the other way, he stated. Addressing the title issue, Mr. Andrews thought that it didn't make much difference what the body was called. Other institutions have university senates or academic senates or faculty senates with no indication of membership. With the 43 faculty, 18 non-faculty in the current membership, there are 43 elected faculty and 10 administrators who serve ex officio, who are not elected, and who are on this body out of all proportion. Out of the 20 academic administrators on campus, 10 are represented here. If faculty were in proportional representation, he pointed out, we'd have 200 faculty on the senate. Speaking to a point of order, Mr. Grossman noted that Roberts Rules of Order call for recognition of those who haven't yet spoken over those who have, a point noted by the chair. He also asked that written documentation of those instances cases where faculty have been overruled be provided at the next meeting. He felt that the faculty is the university and that the proposed amendment will have the result of relegating the faculty to the status of just another employee group.

Ms. Alber spoke in favor the language updating the gender, stating that this is an important issue and the updates are clearly overdue. She also reported that her department expressed a sense of voicelessness and was very united in favor of the changes proposed. Mr. Dillon thought that time should be taken to consider the consequences. He too favored the updating of the language to deal with gender and other issues, but asked the body to consider whether the change in membership will increase or diminish the impact of the Senate. The function of the Senate is to recommend and provide advice to the administration and Board and very seldom does this body have final disposition of an issue. He felt that the change might diminish the impact of the Senate and leave it ranked with the Student Congress and AP Assembly.

Speaking to the AP Assembly issue, Ms. Reynolds stated that there is no intent to exclude faculty from the Assembly, but that, since APs have traditionally been a part of the Senate and Senate Committees, there were already lines of communication and interchange of ideas available through the Senate. Ms. Schartman explained that the AP Assembly doesn't meet as a body to consider issues and make recommendations, and that APs have felt represented in

the University Senate, that it made sense to them to have discussions in the Senate. A change in the Senate may change the function of the Assembly. She spoke in favor of cross group discussions, stating that they are useful, that it is better to do things to unite groups rather than divide them. This change has affected the morale of the APs and left them feeling as though they have no importance on campus.

Ms. Eberwein expressed her appreciation at all the discussion and concerns that have been raised and added that she would have signed the petition if it had called for a more open investigation of what is broken with the current system and what ways would be best to deal with the problems. She felt all governance models have advantages and disadvantages and would like to have an open forum to talk about this before having to vote on it. Specifically she thought we should consider what are the problems, what is not working and then what is the best model for making it work. Are the problems correctable? Is there too much overlap in committee structures? The Senate has complained about being steam rolled by the administration to consider proposals so that they can go to a Board meeting. Now, she feels, we are being steam rolled by the faculty who are pushing this proposal. Ms. Eberwein also expressed concern about the loss of influence if we segregate ourselves or are perceived to segregate ourselves. She wondered about the logistics of the Faculty Senate President being elected for only one year while the Steering Committee serves a two year term. How much support can the President get, she asked; and has anyone considered the potential loss of institutional support for the Senate business. She concluded by stating she doesn't see why we have to rush to judgment on this important an issue.

Mr. Keane expressed some apprehension about the proposal, particularly when the general movement in organizations and organizational theory is to bring people together rather than separate them. However, he noted, when 273 people sign a petition, we need to take it seriously. His department, in contrast to Ms. Alber, was surprised at the proposal. Being forced to deal with the issue is healthy, he opined, and was happy that everyone will have a chance to discuss it and then vote upon it. Mr. Russell explained that the proposal called for the Steering Committee structure to be retained and that, as for the president's term, the committee had no preference between 1 or 2 years. Mr. Andrews said that the issue has been under discussion for a number of months and that there has been plenty of time for consideration. The petitioners want to see the issue addressed in a timely fashion. However, to provide adequate time for consideration, the proposal will be discussed at the March and April Senate meetings, rather than taking it up at the additional Senate meeting in March. He argued that the other bodies can decide how much use they want to make of the powers granted to them, pointing out that the APs have the option of advising the President. He added that the faculty appreciate the work of the APs at the university and on university committees and that having APs, faculty and staff work together is a healthy thing. But, he noted, there are occasions when groups should have the opportunity to act on issues as they see fit.

Ms. Buffard-O'Shea felt that the argument that a faculty only senate may not have as strong a voice implies that the Senate needs to be given legitimacy by the presence of administrators. She averred that faculty feel that they don't have a voice now and that a faculty senate will send a message that the faculty voice counts as such. Mr. Grossman stated that we don't know how the faculty will react to the amendments if we discuss them only in the Senate, that it may or may not be what the faculty wants. He moved, seconded by Mr. Bertocci, that an open hearing for students, faculty and staff be held on the amendments prior to the second reading of the motion, adding that this motion was based on Article IV, section 8 of the Constitution and

requires one quarter of the members present and voting to approve it. The question was raised as to whether this motion was in order at this time or would be better introduced after the discussion of the main motion was completed. Mr. Andrews ruled this is a procedural motion and in order at this time; he added that the amending process also calls for an open hearing after the motion to amend the constitution is approved by the senate and prior to the actual faculty-wide vote. Mr. Moran spoke against the motion, stating that it will prove how unrepresentative this body is with regard to faculty opinion. He argued that the issues have been broadly discussed and that he regards this motion as dilatory and delaying and inherently undemocratic. Mr. Bertocci countered that he didn't think it at all dilatory, that he shares the misgivings that have been expressed, and that he had not heard much discussion in his unit. Given the momentous implications of this amendment, he asked that others be forbearing. Mr. Russell spoke in favor of the motion to hold a hearing, noting that we need the widest possible discussion of the issue. Mr. Connellan also spoke in favor, stating that there may have been wide discussion among faculty but that there are also Senate members who weren't involved in the discussions.

Mr. Riley asked what the outcome of such a hearing would be and whether the information could be gathered into a useful form. Given the interest in the issue, Mr. Downing assumed that the Senate would be well represented at the hearing and interested in the information and opinions expressed. Mr. Liboff thought that there has been adequate discussion, that the faculty feel that the Senate does not respond to problems as the faculty would like and he argued that the motion for an open hearing prior to the second reading is unnecessary. Mr. Grossman however, commented that many departments may not have had general discussion, that while it has been discussed informally it makes sense to provide a forum for an exchange of opinion. He also stated that there might be ways of improving the proposed amendments that could be discussed. Mr. Blume felt there were two issues to be considered; one, is there a problem and the answer to that is yes; and two, is this the solution. Ms. Wood spoke in favor of the amendments and supported the open hearing, feeling that, while there has been discussion, it has been primarily informal, one-on-one exchanges and that an open hearing prior to the second reading would be useful. Mr. Andrews noted that some people find the proposed amendments perfect as given and pointed out that an open hearing is already provided for in the amending process. He felt that it is important to conduct the faculty-wide vote while the faculty are still on campus and added that we should respect those faculty who signed the petition in an extraordinary show of support for the change. At this point Mr. Bertocci called the question and the motion to have an open hearing was approved. A motion to adjourn followed almost immediately, there were no objections and the meeting adjourned at 5:35 p.m.

Submitted by
Linda L. Hildebrand
Secretary to the University Senate

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4/13/99