

Oakland University Senate

Second Meeting
October 15, 1998

Minutes

Members present: Abraham, Alber, Andrews, Bello-Ogunu, Benson, Berger, Bertocci, Blume, Boddy, Brieger, Buffard-O'Shea, Dillon, Doane, Downing, Eberwein, Grossman, Halsted, Herman, Hildebrand, Johnson, Keane, Kleckner, Liboff, Mabee, Macauley, Moore, Pettengill, Polis, Reynolds, Riley, Sen, Sieloff, Speer, Sudol, Wood, Zingo. Guests: Prepolec, Cigna, Clatworthy

Members absent: Blanks, Connellan, David, Ganesan, Gardner, Hovanesian, Jarski, Landau, Lilliston, Long, McNair, Moran, Moudgil, Mukherji, Nakao, Olson, Rozek, H. Schwartz, R. Schwartz, Simon

Summary of actions:

1. Approval of the [minutes of the September 17th](#) Senate meeting. (Mr. Andrews, Mr. Johnson) Approved.
2. Motion to staff Senate standing committees. (Mr. Keane, Mr. Andrews)
3. Motion to change the membership of the Assessment Committee. (Ms. Reynolds, Ms. Moore) Approved following the approval of a motion to waive the second reading (Mr. Andrews, Mr. Pettengill)

Observing a quorum was present, Mr. Downing convened the second meeting of the 1998-99 Senate at 3:14 p.m. He called attention to the September minutes, asking if there were any corrections or additions and, hearing none, entertained a motion to approve them. Mr. Andrews so moved, Mr. Johnson seconded and the minutes were approved. Mr. Downing then proceeded to introduce and welcome Mr. Cigna, the new Vice Provost who will be responsible for various aspects of information technology. Mr. Cigna explained that he will be working primarily with the Banner implementation this year, but nevertheless encouraged individuals to contact him at 2824 or cigna@oakland.edu for assistance with technology problems or needs.

Mr. Downing then opened the floor for discussion of the North Central report, noting it was in the later stages of preparation and a major focus of today's meeting. Ms. Awbrey explained that the final version should be completed by the end of the next week. While the turnout at the open hearings was not as good as hoped, she indicated that she had received a great deal of written feedback. Copies of the final pre-print document will be available on reserve in the Library at the Circulation Desk the last week in October and the final version will be sent to the printer the first week in November. Ms. Awbrey noted that, based on the feedback, a number of changes have been made to the draft, including the addition of the women studies program which had inadvertently been omitted. Mr. Downing added that they are trying to get the next version online so that it would be accessible via the University's home page.

Mr. Andrews began the discussion by expressing concern over the text concerning internal governance procedures, specifically p. 29 which deals with the characterization of the Senate

and governance procedures in general. The report contains an unattributed claim that the process is slow and that makes it difficult for the university to function efficiently. Stating that he doesn't know who wrote this section or whose concerns are reflected in this text, he argued that the Senate and its committees have tried very hard to be responsive and to address issues in a timely fashion. He claimed that the slowness of the process is not caused by the Senate or its committees but by proposals that do not come to the Senate in a timely fashion and which are usually accompanied by problems or incomplete information. He is concerned that the impression is given that the process is inefficient and that the real responsibility is not being fixed where it deserves to be. There is also the perception that, on some occasions, the process is being bypassed or the Senate is asked to rubber stamp decisions. As an added concern, he mentioned that another important issue is that the Senate used to play a role in the formation of search committees for administrators by recommending nominees and lately the Senate has had no input regarding these committees. Ms. Awbrey replied that she isn't sure who wrote this section about the Senate but asked Mr. Andrews to email her substitute language. And added that no one has mentioned the concern about search committees to her. Ms. Awbrey also mentioned that the next draft includes additional information about shared governance and communication.

Ms. Eberwein, explaining that she shares some of the same concerns as Mr. Andrews, noted that the last North Central report included a concern that communication between the administration and faculty needed improvement and quoted from the current draft under consideration:

Improved communication also has resulted in more timely governance action, particularly those involving new degree programs approval. Committees reviewing proposals have kept subsequent review groups apprised of progress, and the University Senate has been willing to adjust its calendar to expedite consideration of important issues.

She found the this paragraph on page 7 of the draft troublesome since it is representing as progress what is actually regression. She fears that these statements refer to the consideration of the Ph.D. in Education last year, where at the first meeting the Senators were just getting the materials so that they were in no position to have read and reflected on them. And the second meeting was held, completely against Senate precedent in the middle of final exam week, in which she stated that, based on the reports of those members who were able to attend, the Senate rolled over and played dead. This is not her idea of improvement. She argued that the Senate and its committees should be judicious and thoughtful, and, if that means, slow, then so be it. Ms. Awbrey commented that this section of the report has been rewritten and the paragraph referred to is no longer is there.

Ms. Berger asked for guidance, wondering how seriously and critically should she read this. She noted that many of the accomplishments of the physics faculty are not mentioned and wondered how detailed it should be. Ms Awbrey replied that the areas she would like reviewed are:

- a) the responses to the concerns brought out by the last North Central visit;
- b) the sections relating to individuals' departments and either the College or Schools;
- c) the SWOT analysis and the conclusion.

Ms. Awbrey explained that she is more concerned about things that may be left out and less concerned about smaller items, reminding everyone that a great deal of detailed information will be available to the team in the Resource Room. Mr. Downing concurred, adding that if all

the faculty accomplishments were to be included in the report, it would be a extraordinarily long document. In response to Mr. Andrews question asking which version is currently on reserve at the library, Ms. Awbrey replied that it is the second draft and that next week, the third draft, the final preprint document will be there. Mr. Liboff wondered about access through the Internet and Ms. Awbrey replied that they hope to get it up next week. Mr. Grossman pointed out that there are a number of items needing editorial work (for example, the Department of Mathematics name change) and Ms. Awbrey agreed, stating that this will be part of the final review and correction of the document. Mr. Grossman noted two concerns. The first on p.31-32 regarding the AAUP and governance, Ms. Awbrey indicated has already been changed. However, the second on p. 86 where there is an incorrect statement that departmental governance procedures must be approved by the Senate Ms. Awbrey wasn't sure had been caught. Hearing no further comments or suggestions, Mr. Downing brought the discussion to a close and encouraged everyone to send changes to Ms. Awbrey as quickly as possible.

The first item of new business, a motion to elect the individuals listed on the agenda to Senate standing committees for the terms specified was quickly approved by the Senate, following the motion by Mr. Keane and the second by Mr. Andrews. Turning to the other item of new business, Ms. Reynolds moved and Ms. Moore seconded a motion to change the membership on the Senate Committee on Assessment to add the Vice President for Student Affairs, or designee. Ms. Moore, current chair of the Assessment Committee, commented that this change actually reflects past and current practice wherein a Student Affairs representative has been attending meetings on an ex-officio basis and added that the committee is comfortable with making it official. With no further discussion ensuing, Mr. Andrews moved to waive the second reading, Mr. Pettengill provided the second. The motion to waive the second reading was approved by the required 3/4 majority and the main motion was then approved.

In good and welfare portion of the meeting Mr. Downing pointed out that a few committee vacancies still persist. Ms. Moore raised a question concerning the Honorary Degree bestowed upon Governor Engler this summer. Mr. Downing replied that the recommendation was approved by both the Honorary Degree Committee and the Senate Steering Committee before going to the Board of Trustees. He added that those Committees and Board of Trustees have also approved the awarding of an honorary degree to Mr. Howard Birndorf to be awarded in the next year, depending upon Birndorf's travel schedule. With no further items of business, the Senate adjourned.

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

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10/26/98