

Oakland University Senate

Fifth Meeting
January 8, 1998
Minutes

Present: Alber, Berger, Bertocci, Blume, Connellan, Cronn, Doane, Downing, Frankie, Gilroy, Goslin, Hildebrand, Keane, Lilliston, Lombard, Longan, Miller, Moore, Olson, Otto, Polis, Rozek, Rush, R. Schwartz, Sen, Sieloff, Simon, Speer, Sudol, Weng, Wood

Absent: Barnett, Belanger, Benson, Blanks, Boddy, Brieger, Dillon, Eberwein, Grossman, Halsted, Haskell, Herold, Jarski, Johnson, Landau, Long, Mabee, Mahamwal, McNair, Moudgil, Mukherji, Papazian, Patterson, Reynolds, Riley, Schochetman, H. Schwartz

Summary of actions

1. Approval of the minutes of December 11, 1997. (Mr. Goslin, Mr. Polis)
2. Report on the status of the Search Committee for the Vice Provost for Information Technology (Ms. David)
3. Motion to recommend to the President and the Board the approval of the Summit Southgate Academy (Mr. Bertocci, Mr. Connellan) Approved following the approval of a motion to waive the second reading (Mr. Keane, Mr. Olson)
4. Motion to approve appointments to Senate Standing Committees (Mr. Keane, Mr. Downing) Approved.

After allowing a little extra time to enable Senators to find their way to the non-traditional Dodge Hall location for this specially called meeting, the Provost called the meeting to order and entertained a motion to approve the minutes from the previous meeting. Mr. Goslin so moved, Mr. Polis provided the second and the minutes were approved without amendment. She then announced the appointment of Mr. Grossman as parliamentarian during Mr. Andrews' sabbatical and noted that Mr. Bertocci would be filling in for Mr. Grossman during today's meeting.

She recognized Ms. David who updated the Senate on the status of the search for a Vice Provost for Information Technology. Ms. David provided a chronology of activities to date relating to the search. An advertisement for a Vice President for Academic Affairs-- Information Systems had run in the *Chronicle for Higher Education* prior to the arrival of Dr. Cronn. Upon her arrival, Dr. Cronn established a Search Committee and the applicants were notified that a committee had been formed and that the chair would be contacting them, possibly with a revised job description. The Search Committee met with Dr. Cronn in September and were told the kind of person desired is not a technocrat but one who understood the environment, one who would support the student learning environment and who understood the complexities of balancing administrative and academic needs. The committee was told they could use a search firm if they wished and proceeded to develop a revised position listing which was shared with other interested groups on campus. Ms. David distributed a copy of the position description to the Senators. The committee decided to use a consultant and chose the firm, MacNaughton Associates. During January 1998 the consultant will be on campus and recruitment will continue through February. By the end of February the committee hopes to have the top candidates identified and will then conduct preliminary video interviews. Interviews of the semi finalists will occur in March and recommendations will be forwarded in April. Ms. David

commented that questions and input are welcome--just contact her or any of the members of the search committee.

The first item of new business was moved by Mr. Bertocci, who, on behalf of the Senate Planning Review Committee, moved that the Senate recommend to the President and the Board the approval of the Southgate Summit Academy. Mr. Connellan provided the second. Mr. Bertocci noted that this will be the seventh academy chartered by Oakland and expressed his opinion that this application is one of the best he has seen. He did, however, sound a cautionary note, stating that the SPRC is very concerned about providing adequate resources for monitoring and reviewing the activities of the academies. Mr. Bertocci stated that OU has been very fortunate in having Ms. Melhado as a supervisor but that the time is coming when one person can't do all the supervision alone. The SPRC report regarding the Southgate Summit Academy was distributed to the Senate and Dr. Cronn noted that the Senate Budget Review Committee has decided not to consider individual academies' budgets but would look at the budgetary impact of the academies on the university as a whole.

In response to Ms. Berger's request for more information about this academy, Ms. Melhado provided a brief description based on her visit to an existing Summit Academy in Flat Rock. She described a multi age, non-graded learning environment with group learning, hands-on active learning, lots of parent participation, and students asking good questions. Teacher planning sessions are held each Friday and student progress is discussed and monitored. There is a waiting list of over 200 and this led to the decision to open up another school. They will build to accommodate K-5 initially and then add 6-8th grades. Mr. Polis wondered who pays for the building and Ms. Melhado responded that the school works out the financing with the banks.

Mr. Doane asked how outcomes are monitored; is there any evidence of academic achievement at OU's charter schools. Ms. Melhado replied that we haven't progressed that far yet but that schools already chartered have been encouraged to develop assessment tools; that the schools need to assess the students when they first enter the academy and then again after a year of instruction. She added that none of OU's charters have yet taken the MEAP. Is there a procedure for evaluating the schools performance and would we pull the plug if it weren't satisfactory asked Mr. Doane. Ms. Melhado commented that this concern is under discussion and that she has developed a checklist to help determine how well a school is doing and to monitor whether or not the curriculum is being followed. She also reminded the Senate that she makes impromptu unannounced visits to each school on a regular basis and sits in on classes. However a formal process for assessment does not yet exist. Mr. Doane stated that we need a process or otherwise we end up in the position of always saying yes. Mr. Bertocci noted that the state is also involved in supervision of these schools and added that the SPRC looks very seriously and critically at the proposals, that no one wants the university to be harmed by a badly run academy.

Ms. Otto commented that parents have the option of removing their students from the academies if they are not satisfied; also that the academies all have very high parent involvement. Mr. Goslin asked about the budgetary oversight. The Provost replied that OU's oversight responsibility includes budgetary matters; she added that the SBRC felt that the review of individual schools' budgets was satisfactory and that their attention would be better spent looking at the overall university implications. Ms. Otto added that each academy manages their own budgets; that Oakland does not give them any money. Each academy

receives a state appropriation and OU receives 3% of what the state pays for each student for oversight. What if a charter school ran up a major deficit asked Mr. Polis. Ms. Otto responded that it is not OU's responsibility but rather that of the school's Board of Directors. OU does received monthly income and expense statements. Ms. Melhado added that a public school has to report any deficit to the state and inform the state how it will be deal with the deficit. And that a charter may be revoked if a satisfactory method of dealing with a deficit is not provided. Mr. Keane noted that the 3% of state aid that OU is currently receiving doesn't go far enough and thus the university is underwriting the supervision of these academies. He commented further, that if we charter more schools, the deficit will increase and as will the need for increased supervision.

Ms. Melhado responded that the reason 4 additional charters are being considered is so that we can build a revenue base; that 10 schools are planned and then a moratorium would be declared. As for oversight, she indicated that we need to involve more faculty personnel in the oversight process. Dr. Cronn added that there should be increased enrollments at some of the existing academies and that as the student base expands, the revenue will increase. And, stated Ms. Melhado, right now, based on past experience, we are looking primarily for well-run sites that are good risks and will easy to oversee and monitor.

Mr. Blume commented that MEAP scores have been criticized as being simplistic and wondered if we have an obligation to help the academies develop other ways of assessing outcomes. Ms. Melhado replied that she has been talking with Mr. Minor about developing ways of assessing a students' progress. Mr. Keane then ventured a motion to waive the second reading; Mr. Olson seconded the motion and the motion was approved. Further discussion prior to the final vote ensued. Mr. Longon noted that the SPRC memo implies that this is the last one for awhile but wondered about the comments that there are additional ones under review. Mr. Bertocci stated that the SPRC is very concerned about providing adequate oversight and that if additional schools are chartered, the high quality of the current oversight should be extended to the new schools as well as be maintained with the existing charters. The new applications will be looked at and evaluated based on their merits but he emphasized that we need to make sure that we can effectively monitor them. With no further discussion forthcoming, the Provost called for a vote on the main motion which was approved.

The second item of new business, a motion to elect the individuals listed in the agenda to Senate Standing Committees, was moved by Mr. Keane, seconded by Mr. Downing and approved with dispatch. No good and welfare items were proposed and the meeting was adjourned at 4:05.

Submitted by
Linda L Hildebrand
Secretary to the University Senate

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