



OAKLAND UNIVERSITY SENATE

OAKLAND UNIVERSITY SENATE

Thursday, 11 April 1991
Seventh Meeting

MINUTES

Senators Present: Appleton, Bertocci, Braunstein, Bricker, Briggs-Bunting, Cass, Chipman, Cowlshaw, Dillon, Eberwein, Eckart, Eliezer, Frankie, Garcia, Griggs, Grossman, Hartman, Herman, Hovanesian, Kazarian, Kleckner, Lederer, Mabee, Miller, Mittelstaedt, Olson, Pine, Rosen, Salomon, Schieber, Schimmelman, Stern, Theisen, Tripp, Urice, Walter, Weng, Williams, Williamson, Winkler, Witt, Zenas.

Senators Absent: Abiko, Beehler, Berven, Cardimen, Champagne, Dahlgren, Fish, Hamilton, Heintz, Liboff, Long, Meehan, Mili, Pettengill, Reddy, Schwartz, Stevens, Tracy, Wedekind, Wood.

Summary of Actions:

1. Minutes of 14 February 1991 (Schieber; Cass). Approved.
2. Amendment to add clarifying language to motion on transfer admissions (Stern; Rosen). Approved.
3. Motion from the Admissions and Financial Aid Committee to adopt policy modifications for certain transfer admissions (Hovanesian; Stern). Approved as amended.
4. Motion from the Committee on Human Relations calling for reports from academic units on activities and plans for dealing with issues related to cultural diversity (Garcia; Briggs-Bunting). First reading.
5. Amendment to #4 above, modifying the reporting date (Braunstein; Stern). First reading.
6. Motion from the Committee on Human Relations recommending establishment of an endowment fund for scholarships (Garcia; Briggs-Bunting). First reading.
7. Amendment to #6 above to reserve part of the fund for counseling and academic assistance (Stern; Kazarian). First reading.
8. Procedural motion from the Steering Committee to staff Senate committees (Tripp; Bricker). Approved.

Mr. Kleckner called the meeting to order at 3:16 p.m. He directed attention to the minutes of 14 February 1991, which were approved by voice vote (intensified by Mr. Stern's accompanying hand signal) upon the motion of Mr. Schieber and Ms. Cass. Prompted by an inquiry from Mr. Grossman, Mr. Kleckner encouraged his colleagues to look forward to the next week's mail for yet undistributed minutes from earlier meetings.

Thus encouraged about the preservation of its history, the Senate moved into action on a complicated agenda. The first item was the one remaining piece of old business, a motion from

the Admissions and Financial Aid Committee to adopt policy modifications for certain transfer admissions (Messrs. Hovanesian and Stern). Mr. Dillon, chair of the sponsoring committee, expressed concern that the specific wording of the motion as it appeared on the agenda somewhat misrepresented his group's purpose in that retention of the policy modification temporarily adopted in April 1989 would maintain 26 credits as the minimum required before the Admissions Office could consider admitting a transfer from another collegiate institution without reference to high school performance rather than reducing that minimum to 24 credits. His committee's proposal also added some language to the admissions policy concerning the kinds of evidence that office might consider. When the secretary asked what specific wording the committee recommended, Mr. Dillon pointed out that the details could be found in the report attached to the previous month's Senate agenda. It consisted of three paragraphs, followed by extensive commentary. To preserve the substance of the committee's proposal without incorporating such a burden of prose into the motion, Mr. Stern suggested inserting the words "as proposed in the report from the Admissions and Financial Aid Committee in its attachment to the agenda." Mr. Dillon found that language acceptable.

Ms. Garcia then inquired what, exactly, he wanted the Senate to vote on and learned that Mr. Dillon sought permanent adoption of the policy stated in his committee's report. Faced with a problem of language, Mr. Kleckner indicated that there were two choices: either defer the matter to another Senate meeting to which the committee could bring whatever language it wished in the form of a motion or modify the motion currently on the floor with the language offered by Mr. Stern. When Mr. Stern raised the point that the committee's report also added language concerning types of evidence that might be reviewed by the Admissions Office, Mr. Kleckner noted that it proposed nothing different from what that office already does. The only substantive changes he observed involved permanent rather than temporary adoption of a reduced number of credits required for transfer admission to be considered purely on the basis of the candidate's college record and reduction of that number from 26 to 24 credits. Mr. Appleton declared himself somewhat halfheartedly in favor of the motion as it actually appeared on the agenda simply for the sake of consistency; he did not relish the idea of sending admissions officers out into the community yet again to communicate another change in policy.

When the chair then called for a vote, the ayes prevailed -- only to have Ms. Tripp inquire what the Senate had just voted to do. Mr. Kleckner thought they had agreed to support the motion on the floor, which implied continuation of the current 26-credit line of demarcation. Finding that some of his colleagues thought they had just endorsed the committee's request to reduce the number to 24, he encouraged Mr. Stern to offer a formal amendment. Seconded by Ms. Rosen, Mr. Stern then moved to amend the motion by addition of the words "as amended by the Senate Committee on Admissions and Financial Aid" at the tail end. A vote on the amendment showed division within the body but preponderance of support for the amendment. Mr. Chipman then inquired about the other language underlined in the committee's report, wondering whether the Admissions Office was being encouraged to review the applicant's success in specific classes. Mr. Dillon responded that "such criteria as" means that the items listed are only some of the indicators of promise that might be reviewed but should not be considered a definitive list. The Admissions Office would still be authorized to distinguish among various kinds of courses, paying special attention to those most indicative of academic success at Oakland University. With that established, the chair called for a vote on the main motion as amended:

MOVED that the Senate recommend to the President and the Board that Section

IV of the Undergraduate Admissions Policy adopted in 1985 be modified to implement permanently the modifications introduced for a trial period at the April 20, 1989 meeting of the University Senate, as amended by the Senate Committee on Admissions and Financial Aid.

The motion carried without dissent.

Thereupon, Mr. Kleckner called upon Ms. Garcia to introduce the first of two motions from the Senate Committee on Human Relations, this being a call for reports from academic units (Second, Ms. Briggs-Bunting):

MOVED that each School or Department shall develop a program to increase understanding of racial and cultural diversity issues and to examine especially those racial and cultural diversity issues important to that particular discipline.

Reports of accomplishments and programming, including ways in which you plan to implement programming in 1991-92, should be submitted by September 30, 1991, to the Senate Committee on Human Relations.

Mr. Chipman launched discussion by inquiring how this activity would be carried out in the College of Arts and Sciences, which has a great many departments. Ms. Garcia explained that her committee was trying to do two things: a) not prescribe to colleagues how they should behave; and b) prescribe to colleagues how they should behave. Appalled that Oakland's faculty should be the only group on campus not yet officially engaged in programs to enhance sensitivity to cultural differences, she noted with relief that some academic units were already hard at work to deal with such issues. She had no specific advice on how the College should conduct its business. Ms. Eckart hoped that matters other than race would be considered in such reports, and Ms. Garcia assured her that the committee had such issues as gender and disability in mind as well.

Mr. Grossman then raised several questions, one about the mechanism for implementing the motion and the other concerning the antecedent of "you" in the second paragraph. Ms. Garcia responded that the pronoun was meant to refer to schools and departments, though readers were also welcome to take it personally. So far as a mechanism for implementation was concerned, Mr. Kleckner assumed that the committee would report to the Senate on what academic units were doing. In that case, Mr. Grossman wondered whether the Senate was putting its authority behind the committee's request for information.

Several questions emerged about the kind of information expected in such reports. Mr. Bertocci asked for examples of what units might offer. Would it be sufficient or acceptable simply to point out curricular subject matter relating to cultural diversity? Ms. Garcia disclaimed any intention on the part of her committee to tell faculty groups what they should do with their curricula but suggested that examining course content might be something departments would wish to do. She cited an example from the Nursing curriculum, which must introduce students to means of interpreting various indicators of bodily condition in patients of different skin color. She also encouraged departments to seek counsel from similar units at other universities. Another matter units might discuss would be the varying ways in which teachers interact in classes with members of various groups. She offered two documents from the School of Education and Human Services as fine examples of reports on the unit's

multicultural programming and on the chronology of its efforts to develop multicultural awareness. She pointed out that her committee hopes to publish and circulate evidence of what academic units are doing.

Mr. Braunstein then pursued the point by asking whether it would be suitable for the School of Business Administration to report a curricular component required in its courses as evidence of what it has been doing to develop multicultural awareness. It would. When Mr. Chipman later asked whether the committee might consider accepting as a serious response a unit's admission of dissatisfaction with what it is currently doing but requesting advice and assistance, Ms. Garcia thought they would consider such an answer valid but noted that academic units have had advice available to them already through Catherine Rush and others. What the Committee on Human Relations really hopes to accomplish is to get every unit to do something substantial in the next academic year, not just sit around and cogitate. Mr. Kleckner thought the essence of the proposal was to get this concern on the front burner. Mr. Stern, guessing that some departments are doing well, hoped that success stories would be made available, and Ms. Garcia said she hoped to issue a sort of dean's list rather than a list of condemnations.

Mr. Braunstein raised the issue of timing. With the academic world headed toward its annual period of aestivation, he worried that chairs would be tempted simply to fill out some sort of a report in the absence of their colleagues, thereby forfeiting the advantages to be gained from intensive departmental discussion. He suggested delaying the reporting date from September 30 to October 15. Ms. Garcia raised no objection to his proposal but simply noted her committee's frustration with constant deferrals. The university has already had two years to think about its response to multicultural diversity, and she considered it high time for people to move ahead. October 15 would be acceptable to her, but not a date in November. Mr. Braunstein, seconded by Mr. Stern, then offered an amendment to move the reporting date. Mr. Chipman preferred to retain the September deadline for the benefit of units that might find themselves in dire need of help in order to make progress during the 1991-92 academic year.

Mr. Urice inquired about the verb "shall develop" in the opening line of the motion, noting that it sounded directive and might prompt some departments to start wondering about possible sanctions for non-compliance. On the other hand, Ms. Garcia regarded "shall" as "a real nice verb," eminently suited to legislation. Nonetheless, she disclaimed any intent on the part of her committee to threaten sanctions; they would be happy to kindle a spark in their colleagues but had no plans to light fires under anyone. That being so, Mr. Urice supposed that some departments would be more receptive to invitations to cooperate than to directives. He proposed rewording the sentence to read that schools or departments would "be encouraged to develop an amendment Ms. Garcia thought too weak, since they had already been "encouraged" for two years. She thought the time had come for a "shall." This interchange brought a query from Mr. Bertocci, who declared himself generally in favor of the proposal but unsure of what it actually said. Are we saying, he wondered, that we shall do this, but if we don't, nothing much will happen? Ms. Garcia, reminding him that the Committee on Human Relations is a relatively new governance body with unusually broad responsibilities, assured him that her group had no disposition to get involved with sanctions. Mr. Bertocci then stated what he understood to be the committee's position: that it encourages reports at this point and is intent on kindling sparks but is not engaged in constructing an elaborate enforcement mechanism. That turned out to be the case.

Mr. Cowlshaw, admitting that he was confused by the word "understanding" in the second line, thought his uncertainty might be widespread. Just whose understanding did the measure propose departments should promote: that of their faculty or of their students? Ms. Garcia judged that the two went together. Other questions about diction resulted in the floating of several trial balloons to clarify language. Mr. Appleton suggested it might be helpful to reword the opening sentence "MOVED that the Senate calls upon each school or department to develop thus scuttling the potentially offensive "shall." Ms. Tripp launched a similar balloon, proposing that the framers simply strike "shall" from the sentence. When Ms. Garcia asked what she wanted to do with "should" in the second paragraph, Ms. Tripp professed affection for that verb. Ms. Rosen flew yet another balloon, intended to replace the words "develop programs;" she would rather ask people to articulate their efforts and communicate their accomplishments. Ms. Briggs- Bunting brought this line of discussion to an abrupt conclusion by declaring herself a balloon-buster. She attacked the tendency to play with semantics rather than grappling with the real problem. Not much is being done, she asserted, and it is time to take action.

Mr. Bricker challenged the assumption that nothing is happening. To his mind, critical interactions are often hidden ones such as faculty conversations with students in offices, classrooms, and hallways as professors attempt to find out how they can help people learn. He thought that good things were happening on that level. Ms. Briggs-Bunting agreed but warned that we sometimes unconsciously proceed in ways that counteract our good intentions. She spoke as a woman faculty member who had been addressed as "Honey" by a colleague who intended no disrespect. Ms. Eckart called attention to research documenting how differently instructors respond to women, men, and minority students in terms of eye contact and similar behaviors.

Mr. Winkler agreed with Ms. Briggs-Bunting's point that it would be an easy but relatively profitless thing for the Senate to spend its time rewriting the motion. He considered the issues coming out at the meeting to be important ones that raised questions about his own classroom experience. It occurred to him that he could not remember seeing any minority students in his advanced neurobiology class. Yet he felt that the goals most worth pursuing were not those restricted by discipline but those, like communication, that cut across departmental lines. Agreeing with Mr. Bricker that the real issue is a one-on-one matter of human dynamics, he stated that there has to be a beginning somewhere to improve conditions but admitted that he had no idea how to start. He hoped that good ideas would emerge from the reports solicited by the Committee on Human Relations. Ms. Garcia assured him that her committee had no intention of limiting academic units to consideration of course content issues in presenting their reports, though she thought it a good starting point for a unit to ask itself why it has no minority majors. Mr. Winkler responded that the science departments have had a very difficult time recruiting underrepresented groups despite their various efforts, including programs for high school students. He took comfort from remembering, however, that the same sort of problem used to confront science departments when they tried to recruit women majors. Still, he had no idea how to start a "program." Ms. Garcia responded that "program" certainly did not mean debating what film to show faculty or student groups to promote sensitivity.

Mr. Stern confirmed Mr. Winkler's impression that science departments faced special problems with minority recruitment, though he doubted there was significant racism in Chemistry, Biology, and Physics. Having done all they know how, those departments found that none of it seems to be working. He wondered how the committee would react if those units were to throw back answers to its inquiries calling for a vast influx of funds allocated for

minority hiring and scholarships. Ms. Garcia suggested that they request information and suggestions from science departments elsewhere. If an issue is a serious one within a discipline, she challenged people to find ways to deal with it.

Mr. Weng, however, advised the committee to develop a cross-disciplinary program for the whole university rather than encouraging individual academic units to devise thirty or forty. Mr. Olson retorted that he would applaud sixty, seventy, or a hundred different programs. He argued that we need to approach this problem in every possible way rather than relying on any one program, which would just reach the tip of the iceberg. Ms. Mittelstaedt hoped that awareness that we are all teachers might prove a unifying point as members of the community attempt to develop a university-wide program to encourage multicultural awareness, with that awareness gradually bearing fruit in appropriate curricular choices in the different disciplines.

Mr. Kleckner mentioned that one of the things Ms. Catherine Rush has tried to do in her sessions with departments is to get issues out onto the table, prompting healthy knock-down, drag-out debate of the sort that occurs when faculty members confront matters like curriculum that we care about profoundly. That point struck Mr. Braunstein as a good argument in favor of his amendment to move back the reporting date by two weeks. He considered it so important for departments to engage fully in discussion and decisions that he wanted to prevent chairs from responding unilaterally to questions of general importance. Ms. Tripp, noting that concerns about sensitivity had emerged as central to this Senate discussion, wondered whether the motion could be modified to encompass issues that had arisen on the floor. She worried about departments' misunderstanding what is asked of them.

Mr. Witt offered the School of Engineering and Computer Science as an example of an academic unit already living out the challenges of multiculturalism. His brief demographic description of his school showed its faculty to constitute a veritable United Nations. He invited senators to join his faculty for lunch to see how the most culturally diverse faculty on campus has learned to get along together. Nonetheless, he classified himself with Mr. Winkler among those who would not know where to start in developing the sort of program that seemed to be envisaged in this motion.

Mr. Bricker suggested that one of the most effective ways to increase understanding is to promote sustained one-on-one mentorships linking faculty members to students who might have difficulty feeling comfortable in this environment. He urged the Committee on Human Relations to explore ways of encouraging such activity. Mr. Herman responded to this by calling attention to two such programs already in existence: the first is run through Monifa Jumanne's office to match incoming freshmen with faculty and staff mentors; the second, run through CIPO, puts students in regular contact with faculty or alumni mentors. He welcomed volunteers for either program and mentioned that similar programs were being planned. On that hopeful note, Mr. Kleckner suggested moving ahead to the second piece of new business.

He invited Ms. Garcia, again seconded by Ms. Briggs-Bunting, to place on the floor the second motion from the Committee on Human Relations:

MOVED that the Senate shall recommend to the President of Oakland University that the Board of Trustees dedicate the sum of one million dollars to endow scholarships to enhance the diversity of the university's student population.

Mr. Stern, seconded by Ms. Kazarian, immediately introduced a friendly amendment. Having observed in the physical sciences that the problem of attrition compounds already serious problems of attracting minority students, he wished to add "some portion of which should be reserved for advising and academic assistance as either of these prove to be necessary" to the language of the original motion. It made no sense to him for the university to bring in students without regard for ensuring a successful academic experience.

When Mr. Kleckner suggested that the Senate discuss the main motion before deliberating on the amendment, Ms. Tripp inquired what the university already does to encourage multicultural diversity. Ms. Garcia reminded people that the federal government had recently raised a commotion by threatening to eliminate race-specific scholarships. This change of policy would have no impact on Oakland, however, since this university complies with the more stringent Michigan state law that takes precedence over federal legislation. Michigan law prohibits restricting scholarships on the basis of race or gender. Although the University of Michigan seemingly disregards this statute, Oakland University scrupulously honors it. She pointed out that this motion was not made to institute specific scholarships, even though students involved in Operation Graduation advocated just such action in order to attract underrepresented student populations such as Hispanics. She noted that everybody agreed that one of Oakland University's problems is that we have such an inadequate scholarship fund. Her committee believes that building an endowment specifically for scholarships would have a positive impact on efforts to increase multicultural diversity.

Ms. Garcia considered the Stern amendment friendly but warned that there was not really very much money in this proposal. Mr. Stern repeated that his main concern was with retention. The Chemistry department relies heavily on Academic Skills tutoring to help minority students succeed in its courses. He maintained that the university should do everything possible to make sure students who enroll here actually graduate.

Mr. Bricker redirected discussion by inquiring whether the committee had talked about the types of students its members hoped to attract. Were they trying to compete for those exceptionally well prepared minority students who are heavily recruited by many institutions and whom we have had difficulty attracting. Or were they trying to help out the more typical students who are not superstars but could attend the university if assisted with their financial needs? Ms. Garcia said they hoped to attract both. Scholarships might help us compete, and a scholarship offer might provide what it takes to make a Hispanic candidate feel welcome in this environment. She pointed out that we have to deal with all problems simultaneously, including underrepresented students and underprepared ones. The more we can increase our scholarship endowment, the more she believed we could help potential students see Oakland University as a good place.

Mr. Grossman then asked how much of the university's current endowment was devoted to scholarships. Mr. Kleckner admitted that it was a small amount, though he did not know the exact figure. Mr. Herman reported that the university's financial aid commitment over the past five years has only reflected tuition increases with no substantial new money provided. Unless the basic endowment for scholarships is increased, he warned, we will actually have to reduce substantially the current number of endowed scholarships. Committing a million dollars to this fund would only keep things on the current level.

Since the Senate only recommends policy to the Board on such matters, Mr. Stern wondered

whether it would be appropriate to recommend that some of the income realized from the sale of Squirrel Road land be devoted to scholarships. Ms. Garcia replied that her committee's proposal emerged originally in response to Mr. Kleckner's indication that the university community was welcome to submit proposals for disposition of the money expected from sale of that land. They decided however that they did not want to tie their proposal to any single source of funds, given the uncertainty that exists about how much money may come in from the Squirrel Road transaction or when that funding might arrive. Mr. Kleckner stated that the university's current endowment amounts to about \$3 million, most of it dedicated by the donors for specific purposes such as the Dodge Chair and Meadow Brook Hall. There is little undesignated money at present, though an effort is being made to increase the undesignated endowment. Money is gradually building from some land sales, and the Squirrel Road transaction will eventually add to that amount. Meanwhile, a campaign is being launched to raise a \$5 million-dollar endowment for the library. He pointed out that little spendable cash is realized each year from an endowment; the university's current practice is to use only 5% interest each year for designated purposes, returning any additional interest to build the endowment itself. On that basis, the million dollars called for in this motion would yield about \$50,000 in scholarships. The key things for which the university really needs endowment money are recognized to be scholarships and the library. The Board recognizes this fact, he assured the Senate, but has made no allocation decisions as yet. He judged the motion from the Committee on Human Relations "not untimely."

With the floor opened to discussion of the Stern amendment, Mr. Bertocci asked about the mechanism for implementing it. How would scholarship money be used for the academic support Mr. Stern envisaged? Would scholarships be provided for students who tutor in the Academic Skills program? Would x amount of the annual funding from the endowment go toward scholarship and y amount toward advising and tutoring? Mr. Stern said he would like to see a plan that would allow a student admitted under some affirmative action program to spend an hour a week with an advisor. Mr. Chipman declared himself sympathetic with Mr. Stern's concern but not with his amendment. He would not recommend asking for more hard cash to be thrown at a problem until all in the university community have done all they can on a human level. He objected to the automatic connection between minority recruitment and remediation and suggested that scholarships be used simply to alleviate financial pressures on students.

With regard to those financial pressures, Mr. Dillon reported on a discussion his Admissions and Financial Aid Committee had earlier this academic year with Lee Anderson, director of Financial Aid. They learned that roughly \$3.7 million is now being allocated in grants (not loans) through the Financial Aid program. None of that, as Mr. Kleckner noted, comes from endowed scholarships: Financial Aid is need-based; whereas scholarships are awarded on whatever basis the university wishes -- always including scholastic performance. Mr. Dillon felt confident that the university was already helping students considerably with their fiscal needs. In that case, Mr. Cowlshaw conjectured, this proposal fit into a second category of award not really meant to overcome financial barriers. Both Ms. Garcia and Mr. Kleckner exclaimed that it certainly was meant to provide that sort of help. Ms. Garcia lamented that it is getting easier and easier for a student with real financial need to flush out of the computer in Iowa that determines eligibility for federal aid programs, and Mr. Kleckner pointed out that scholarships can supplement other kinds of support. On that note, he drew discussion to a close until the second reading.

The remaining item of new business was a procedural motion from the Steering Committee to

appoint members to the Senate's standing committees (Moved, Ms. Tripp; seconded, Mr. Bricker). As no demand arose from the floor for Ms. Tripp to read the pages of names from the agenda, Mr. Kleckner excused her from that duty (and the Secretary claims the same exemption, simply directing the curious to pages 3-6 of the Senate agenda for 11 April). The motion won approval without discussion or dissent.

Fatigued by discussion of earlier issues and aware that another Senate meeting must soon follow, senators forbore to offer private resolutions for the good of the order. That allowed Mr. Kleckner to move directly to several information items. He announced with regret that no report has yet emerged from the Ad hoc Subcommittee on Conference Center Planning. As Mr. Pettengill was absent from the Senate that day, not even an oral account could be provided. The chair promised to confer with Mr. Pettengill to make arrangements for the committee's report to reach the Senate. In any event, he noted, the two motions from the Committee on Human Relations necessitated an additional meeting; it was possible that the Pettengill Committee might also make use of that occasion, though it might need yet another gathering of the Senate. Although nothing had happened recently with regard to Board action on a conference center or was expected to happen immediately, Mr. Kleckner could not predict with confidence anything beyond this month. He proposed that the Senate schedule an extra meeting the following Thursday, the 18th of April, in a room to be announced. He also suggested that members hold their calendars free for Monday, the 29th, which constitutes the interlude between winter and spring terms.

Mr. Williamson then raised a final question about whether any interesting developments could be reported with regard to the university's planning process. Mr. Kleckner replied that the Board Subcommittee on Planning was about to get to work on the Strategic Guidelines. On that note, he declared the meeting adjourned by general assent at 5:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted
Jane D. Eberwein
Secretary to the University Senate

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