



OAKLAND UNIVERSITY SENATE

OAKLAND UNIVERSITY SENATE

Thursday, 15 November 1984
Third Meeting
128, 129, 130 Oakland Center

MINUTES

Senators Present: Appleton, Arbour, Berger, Butler, Bledsoe, Chapman-Moore, Chipman, Christina, Copenhaver, Downing, J. Eberwein, R. Eberwein, Edgerton, Eliezer, Evans, Frankie, Garcia, Gerulaitis, Grossman, Hamilton, Hartman, Hildebrand, Horwitz, Howes, Ketchum, Kleckner, Moore, Moorhouse, Russell, Schimmelman, Shepherd, Shichi, Snider-Feldmesser, Splete, Strauss, Tomboulian, Tripp, Wagner.

Senators Absent: Bertocci, Boganey, Brown, Burke, Cass, Champagne, Evarts, Federlein, Hanmerle, Heubel, Hough, Lindell, McCabe, McClory, Pine, Pino, Schwartz, Tracy, Windeknecht, Workman.

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS;

1. Minutes of 18 October 1984 (Gerulaitis; Tripp). Approved.
2. Motion to fill a vacancy on the General Education Committee (Hildebrand; R. Eberwein). Approved.
3. Resolution of thanks for members of the Commission on Excellence (Splete; Frankie). Approved.

Mr. Kleckner called the meeting to order at 3:15 p.m., directing attention to the minutes of the October meeting. These were approved with neither discussion nor dissent (Moved, Ms. Gerulaitis; Seconded, Ms. Tripp). Yet again, no old business confronted the body, which turned instead to two items of new business. First among these was a motion from the Steering Committee to fill the latest vacancy on a standing committee (Moved, Ms. Hildebrand; Seconded, Mr. Eberwein):

MOVED that Richard Burke be confirmed as appointed to the General Education Committee for the 1984-85 academic year, replacing David Daniels.

Mr. Moorhouse, expressing great confidence in Mr. Burke's abilities, inquired about the current membership of the General Education Committee?specifically representation of faculty from outside Arts and Sciences. When assured that the Committee now boasts the services of Mr. Edgerton from the School of Engineering and Computer Science and Mr. Fish from the School of Human and Educational Services and apprised of the odd fact that there were no additional non-College volunteers for this honorific assignment, he expressed satisfaction with the Steering Committee's nomination. The motion carried without opposition. Mr. Kleckner noted that most such vacancies come about because of sabbaticals and other leaves but that the

Steering Committee has shown no enthusiasm for his proposal to reduce these changes of state on Senate committees by eliminating sabbaticals.

The second item of business was a resolution presented by the Steering Committee (Moved, Mr. Splete; Seconded, Ms. Frankie):

RESOLVED that the University Senate thank the members of the Commission on University Excellence for conducting a complex study of significant issues and for issuing a thoughtful report as the basis for further deliberation and legislative action and that this body particularly commend Professor Curt Chipman for his informative reports on Commission procedures and findings.

The resolution was approved unanimously, with Mr. Kleckner adding his personal emphasis to the group expression of gratitude. Mr. Chipman thanked the Senate on his own behalf and that of his fellow-senators from the Commission and promised to convey the sentiments of the Senate to all CUE members.

Mr. Kleckner then reported on the Steering Committee's disposition of those CUE recommendations that must be considered by various committees before coming to the Senate for action. Most of the recommendations in the first chapter?the one dealing with admissions Issues?are being delegated to the Admissions and Financial Aid Committee, with the Graduate Council assigned recommendations on graduate admissions. The Provost will create an *ad hoc* committee to consider modifications in the special admissions/summer support program. Recommendations on competency and proficiency standards are being delegated to the General Education Committee, the Teaching and Learning Committee, and UCUI. Those on academic program review mechanisms will go to UCUI, the Graduate Council, and the Steering Committee itself. Matters pertaining to academic support systems will be variously distributed: advising issues to the Academic and Career Advising Committee; computing issues to the Academic Computing Committee and (insofar as they demonstrate resource implications) the APPC; financial aid concerns to the Admissions and Financial Aid Committee and the APPC; library recommendations mainly to the Library Council; general academic skills problems (those of students at large as well as the summer support group) to the same *ad hoc* committee that will be formed to look at the Academic Support Program; writing skills matters to another *ad hoc* committee to be appointed early in 1985 by the Provost; and mathematical skills questions to the Admissions and Financial Aid Committee and UCUI. Recommendations related to support for faculty development will be considered by the Steering Committee and the APPC.

When discussing those varied issues encompassed in the final chapter of the CUE report, Mr. Kleckner acknowledged deficiencies in the current campus information systems and recognized the deleterious effect of such information gaps (especially budgetary ones) on planning processes. He indicated that various offices are now working to provide data systematically. Several local information systems are envisaged rather than one central one. Space restrictions continue to be a major concern, potentially correctable in the long run as a result of the upcoming development campaign. Various means of creating space are now being considered, even to the possibility of having a private contractor build an office building for Oakland University use on our land and then leasing it from that contractor for a stipulated period after which it would be ours. In the meantime, more residence hall space is being liberated for classroom use, and plans are afoot for renovation of the Farmhouse for offices.

The trailers behind Dodge Hall serve as dramatic reminders of current space constraints. The Provost thought it likely that some recommendations resulting from the CUE report would make it through committees in time to be brought before the Senate for 1985 action and implementation. No clear timetable has yet emerged.

An open forum on the Commission on University Excellence report followed upon these announcements. Mr. Edgerton launched discussion by remarking, non-invidiously, on a salient omission?wondering why nothing was said about how well we are doing in attracting and educating highly qualified students. Mr. Chipman thought that topic might be encompassed to some extent in a recommendation to the Teaching and Learning Committee to look into the question of whether we are teaching anybody anything. He urged his fellow-senators to read a recent *Chronicle of Higher Education* article summarizing an important study of assessment of educational outcomes; Mr. Copenhaver advised that the committees studying such issues be supplied with copies of that national report. Mr. Kleckner suggested that some sort of exit exam, graded according to national norms, might be useful; although Ms. Gerulaitis reacted to the possibility as the "last step on the way to declaring bankruptcy." She would find it depressing to think that classes taken could no longer serve as an index of learning. Ms. Berger supposed we could get some sort of useful information on how our best students fare by looking at Graduate Record Examination scores and similar nationally-standardized measures. Mr. Horwitz, opining that "the GMAT can fall on its own failings," urged caution in turning over our sense of institutional mission to any testing service, while Mr. Eberwein pointed out that the GRE presupposes one curricular design in any subject area?a design that need not always reflect the choices of bright students. Mr. Christina, moving the discussion to a different though related point, expressed amazement that Oakland University has not to date required any sort of entrance examination. He wondered why not. According to Mr. Kleckner, the Senate specifically opted some years back not to use ACT and SAT scores for admission purposes but only for advising.

Mr. Grossman then put in a plug for recommendations made by CUE to renumber certain courses-including the lowest level math ones-and to deny graduation credit for them. The Mathematical Sciences Department and the Mathematics Association of America support this policy. Ms. Garcia rejoined that the Rhetoric, Communications, and Journalism Department recommends exactly the opposite policy on its writing, reading, and study skills courses She receives ten to fifteen inquiries a year from other institutions that respect Oakland University for its fine remedial program. The basis on which this program rests is graduation credit for supportive courses. She called attention to statements in earlier chapters of the report that stress the importance of recruiting and supporting disadvantaged students. Ms. Hamilton pointed out that Rhetoric 103 is patterned after a Stanford University study skills course that carries credit on its home campus. Mr. Kleckner, calling attention to CUE recommendations on the Academic Support Center anticipated that UCUI would face a lively debate on this issue of graduation credit. Emphasizing the complexity of the problem Mr. Moorhouse recall that California once developed a system for placing high school community college, and college course offerings at various levels to clarify correspondences; he wished such a system existed in Michigan.

Ms. Tripp expressed greater interest in the current placement pattern of Rhetoric students. CUE found no visible correlation between such placements and either ACT scores or years of high school study. She advised looking to some sort of placement examination. Ms. Hamilton pointed out that, with the ACT not required for admission here, the Rhetoric Department lacks this Information. The ACT measures reading ability, and the SAT measures general language

skills; neither evaluates writing performance as such. The predictive value of such tests may, therefore, be suspect. Mr. Kleckner noted that we do have data now on some fraction of our FTIACs who take the ACT. He knows of studies examining the correlation between reading scores and writing skills, but results still seem inconclusive.

"Bottom line" thinking came into play at the end of this discussion. Ms. Tripp inquired whether anyone has yet projected the dollar figures that would be entailed if all these recommendations should actually be Implemented. Mr. Kleckner confessed that such a figure would be hard to estimate it would certainly be high. He recognized that we cannot do all these things within the same time frame but will have to begin talking about priorities. \

When no private resolutions were offered for the good of the order Mr. Kleckner provided some information about the Governor's Commission on the Future of Higher Education in Michigan, which will publish its report next month. There are still few or no leaks, but it seems inevitable that a privileged status will be accorded the Big Three institutions, with Michigan Technological University possibly being included within their august ranks because of its distinctive mission. A great deal of information has been offered to the Commission, although it has directly requested relatively little?too little, it would seem, on which to build a reasonable set of recommendations.

With no other information items raised from the floor, the Senate adjourned at 3:58 p.m. upon motion of Mr. Appleton.

Respectfully submitted:
Jane D. Eberwein
Secretary to the University Senate

Back to
OAKLAND UNIVERSITY
S E N A T E
Home Page