



OAKLAND UNIVERSITY SENATE

OAKLAND UNIVERSITY SENATE

Thursday, 18 October 1984
Second Meeting
Gold Rooms A and B, Oakland Center

MINUTES

Senators Present: Appleton, Arbour, Berger, Bertocci, Boganey, Burke, Butler, Bledsoe, Cass, Chapman-Moore, Chipman, Christina, Copenhaver, Downing, J. Eberwein, R. Eberwein, Eliezer, Evans, Evarts, Frankie, Garcia, Gerulaitis, Grossman, Hamilton, Hartman, Hildebrand, Howes, Ketchum, Kleckner, McCabe, McClory, Moore, Pine, Pino, Russell, Schimmelman, Schwartz, Shepherd, Splete, Strauss, Tracy, Tripp, Wagner, Workman.
Senators Absent: Brown, Champagne, Edgerton, Federlein, Hammerle, Heubel, Horwitz, Hough, Lindell, Moorhouse, Shichi, Snider-Feldmesser, Tomboulion, Windeknecht.

Summary of Actions:

1. Minutes of 20 September 1984 (Gerulaitis; Tripp). Approved as corrected.
2. Motion to fill vacancies on the Academic and Career Advising Committee and UCUI (Downing; Splete). Approved.
3. Report from the Commission on University Excellence (Chipman).

Mr. Kleckner called the meeting to order at 3:16 p.m., greeting new Senators before proceeding to discussion of the minutes of 20 September 1984 (Moved, Ms. Gerulaitis; Seconded, Ms. Tripp). The secretary called attention to two errors. Senator Splete should have been acknowledged present, and two parenthetical items on page 4 should be transposed to establish that state funding represents slightly more than half of the University budget and tuition somewhat less than half. The minutes, thus corrected, were approved without discussion.

With no old business to confront, Mr. Downing (seconded by Mr. Splete) presented a Steering Committee motion to fill vacancies on two standing committees. The motion carried unanimously without debate; so Elaine Chapman-Moore will replace Roberta Schwartz as chair of the Academic and Career Advising Committee for the 1984-85 academic year while Carol Zenas will replace Penny Cass on the University Committee on Undergraduate Instruction for the same period. This action, so expeditiously concluded, brought the legislative action of the day to a close, liberating Senators to hear a report from their colleague Mr. Chipman on the newly-released preliminary report of the Commission on University Excellence.

Mr. Kleckner mentioned that the report had gone out in the campus mail the day before this meeting so that Senators might have copies for their consideration. With no time for preliminary study of this complex document, members were not expected to deliberate on

specific recommendations but were invited instead to get an overview from Mr. Chipman of the Commission's work, with guidelines on how to read the report. The chair noted that the Steering Committee would actually steer specific proposals and sections to appropriate committees (in some cases standing ones, others ad hoc) for additional study and eventual submission to the Senate for action.

Labeling the CUE report "a pretty serious document," Mr. Chipman opened his remarks with the observation that an institution seldom goes through so intensive a study of such a significant range of issues and urged his colleagues to make maximum use of this unusual process. He noted that the report is a "complex document," entailing seventy separate, serious recommendations. Recognizing that the report must stand on its own, supported by its own evidence, he opted not to boll down an already powerfully distilled statement but urged his fellow Senators to deal thoughtfully with the report as a whole.

Mr. Chipman began his report with a summary of public events that marked the history of his Commission, from President Champagne's announcement to the Senate in September 1983 of his intent to appoint such a group, through its actual appointment and charge, his own interim report to the Senate last December and the publication at that time of a study outline guiding CUE'S activities, the data-gathering stage of work last winter when CUE (helped substantially by many campus agencies and Individuals) accumulated Information on the six areas of concern listed in its charge, to its submission of this preliminary report to the President in June and the deans in the summer. Now that the report has come before the University community as a whole, he noted that the President envisages an extensive public debate this year on its discoveries and recommendations.

The report circulated to the Senate includes the beginning and main body of CUE'S report to the President, excluding extensive appendices. These would be costly to print for general distribution but are available in various administrative offices for anyone who wishes to consult them. Supportive materials also exist for the use of persons who will be carrying on this work. These include tapes, surveys, and the Commission's work-file and budget. He estimated that about \$9,000.00 had been spent on this project, with most work voluntarily contributed by CUE members and other University personnel.

The report is titled a preliminary one because that is what President Champagne charged the Commission to submit. It is also preliminary in that some survey results were unavailable when the draft was prepared in the spring. Data arriving later seem unlikely to change the final result of any recommendations. The final report, as Mr. Chipman foresees it, should record what the community actually does about these ideas.

Walking his audience through this massive report, he urged Senators to read the introduction carefully, with close attention to the official charge. He indicated four essential "hedges" to material in the document: 1) charge items define the limits of what CUE attempted to do; 2) the study was restricted to excellence in the University's instructional role rather than scholarship or service; 3) the main effort was to ascertain how well we are doing what we say we are doing; and 4) CUE set no priorities within this report because of problems entailed in estimating costs. Each section, he pointed out, is organized according to a uniform design that begins with the charge item, reviews methodology, presents formal commission findings, and offers the recommendations that flow from these findings.

The remainder of Mr. Chipman's report featured a chapter-by-chapter survey of the actual report, with particular attention to the first chapter on admissions requirements as a paradigm for organization of other sections. He noted how CUE had gone about studying current admission requirements for six different student groups and documenting their performance once matriculated, how it had used information from other educational institutions about their practices, and how this data led the Commission to specific recommendations in four areas: 1) a general new admissions policy for Oakland University; 2) restructuring of the current academic support program; 3) use of placement testing; and 4) graduate admissions.

Describing work on competency and proficiency standards as "intellectually, one of the harder things we had to do," the chair explained how his committee had accumulated information on the ways classes here are typically conducted and what is characteristically expected of students, how CUE made use of employer, alumni, and student questionnaires, and how it arrived at its recommendation of an additional graduation requirement that would entail a second level of appraisal of writing capability as students approach graduation.

When studying program reviews, CUE altered its charge slightly to combine continuing education and general academic programs?whether or not they are yet on any formal review cycle. He recognized that program reviews represent a serious, expensive institutional commitment but termed such a program an investment in the long-range future of the University. He advised especially careful reading of this section.

CUE added financial aid to the lengthy list of academic support systems and services it studied?for each of which it considered the intended effects of the services and whether the existing systems are able to achieve them. Recognizing that major money questions loom in this whole section of the report, Mr. Chipman highlighted the Library as an area of special concern since it is the touchstone of institutional excellence. He noted how studies of skill development programs here and elsewhere had led to recommendations to discontinue some of these activities, withhold graduation credit from others, and reclassify some programs.

The fifth chapter, the one on faculty development, considers such issues as sabbaticals, travel policy, and appointment reviews. The recommendation that Oakland University publish its overall review criteria has already been accomplished by administrative action over the past summer. The sixth chapter, comprehensively entitled "Other Areas for Review," devotes attention to the general University budget and planning process, to its information systems, and to space problems and related concerns with the physical environment. Mr. Chipman concluded his report by commenting that matters have come full circle from his interim report last December. At that time, CUE?recognizing the limitations of a small group in gathering data?requested a tremendous volume of information from the University community in order to carry on its work and arrive at recommendations. It has now presented those recommendations as adequately as sixteen persons could hope to do so and lobs the ball back into the court for other people to maintain in motion.

In the wake of a report so comprehensive yet so clear, there were few immediate questions save for Mr. Bertocci's inquiry about procedures to be followed at this point. He wondered whether the Senate would be asked to approve the report as a whole or deliberate upon particular recommendations. Mr. Kleckner indicated that the Steering Committee would delegate portions of the report to appropriate committees for their review and for formulation of motions to be brought before the Senate. Some matters can be accomplished by direct

administrative action without legislative approval; he promised to report such actions to the Senate. He thanked all members of the Commission for "this very significant report" and called attention to the mass of backup information now lodged in his office as a useful result of their study. He explained that he had decided to release this Preliminary Report now that it appears that there will be no change in CUE recommendations as a result of information that trickled in over the summer. He would appreciate receiving communications from anyone with advice to offer the Steering Committee concerning this report.

The Good and Welfare portion of the meeting brought an announcement from Ms. Frankie about the special exhibit of faculty research and scholarship to be displayed in the Oakland Center Monday and Tuesday afternoons of the following week as part of the twenty-fifth anniversary celebration. Mr. Howes, similarly motivated to circulate useful news, called attention to materials announcing Mellon Fellowships and Harry S. Truman Scholarships for which our undergraduates may compete.

With information items thus blending into Good and Welfare, Mr. Kleckner then reminded Senators that the "Meadow Brook Revisited" keynote for the School of Economics and Management has been moved ahead from Monday, October 29, to Thursday, October 25. He went on to report on recent Board actions, including the unanimous decision reached at the special meeting of October 2 to voice formal opposition to Proposal C (Voters' Choice) on the November ballot and to instruct the administration to distribute materials on its potentially deleterious consequences. At its regular October meeting, the Board approved installation of a traffic light at the Adams Road entrance. It also approved submission of the annual PRR wish-list to Lansing for budgetary increases and specific capital outlays. Hopes for answers to some of these prayers have risen in response to the favorable action taken last year on several of our requests?notably the new Library circulation system and air conditioning improvements, the renovation of the Farmhouse for office use, and water line replacements between the Oakland Center and Hannah Hall. Library expansion continues to be the first priority for capital outlay requests, with the new science building moved to second place and the Dodge Hall addition ranked third. Another item of interest raised by Mr. Kleckner concerned hopeful news about negotiations with prospective tenants of the technology-research park.

Upon motion of Mr. Bertocci, the Senate adjourned at 4:35 p.m., its business for the month completed.

Respectfully submitted:

Jane D. Eberwein

Secretary to the University Senate

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