



OAKLAND UNIVERSITY SENATE

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Thursday, February 12, 1981
Fifth Meeting
128-130 Oakland Center

MINUTES

Senators Present: Arnold, Beardman, Bertocci, Bieryla, Brown, Chipman, Christina, J. Eberwein, R. Eberwein, Edgerton, Evarts, Feeman, Felton, Fullmer, L. Gerulaitis, Ghausi, Grossman, Hetenyi, Heubel, Horwitz, Jones, Ketchum, Kleckner, Lentz, Matthews, Moeller, Mourant, Pettengill, Somerville, Stevens, Strauss, Tower, Wilson

Senators Absent: Boulos, Butterworth, Caligiuri, Cameron, Garcia, Gardiner, R. Gerulaitis, Griffith, Hammerle, Hitchingham, Jaymes, Johnson, Karasch, Kingstrom, Liboff, McMahan, Miller, Mitra, Obear, Otto, Ozinga, Pak, Pierson, Pine, Riley, Scherer, Schmidt, Schwartz, Shepherd

Presiding Officer George T. Matthews called the meeting to order at 3:15. He introduced the day's business with a review of the 1981-82 budget situation, warning that we must not respond with excessive euphoria to Governor Milliken's substantial proposed increase for higher education-- based as it is on that worthy's optimistic assumptions about industrial recovery and tax reform. Oakland University will formulate a budget indexed to assumptions of our own about enrollments and tuition, hoping for good news from Lansing but not counting on major new allocations. Mr. Matthews promised to keep the Senate and its various constituencies regularly informed about budgetary developments. He noted that this year's cutbacks have already diminished the quality of life on campus as represented by mail delivery, administration of services to students, and library and laboratory acquisitions.

Following these introductory remarks, the Senate approved the minutes of its January 15, 1981, meeting without queries or corrections (Moved, Mr. Hetenyi; Seconded, Mr. Arnold). As the Senate had dispatched all its old business at that meeting, attention turned at once to new resolutions from the APPC and the Performing Arts Faculty Council. The first item of business was a motion from the Academic Policy and Planning Committee (Moved, Mr. Kleckner; Seconded, Mr. Tower).

MOVED that the name Department of Learning Skills be changed to Department of Rhetoric.

Mr. Morse, explaining his Department's request for this name change, justified the proposal for practical and aesthetic reasons. His Colleagues hope to correct the delusions of high school counselors, college registrars elsewhere in Michigan, and even our own students that Learning Skills offers only remedial work. He pointed out that the Learning Skills Department, while

putting considerable effort into remediation, offers only a small number of developmental courses in proportion to its standard freshman composition sequence. He indicated that Rhetoric is a nationally conventional title for writing departments. He anticipated no change in the Department's functions nor in University policy.

As though to verify Robert Frost's dictum that "All the fun's in how you say a thing," senators considered various implications of the proposed name change. Courses would be retitled, and professorial titles would have to be modified in the Faculty Agreement. All existing courses could still be offered within a somewhat flexible definition of rhetoric. Mr. Stevens, representing the University department most strongly associated with oral rhetoric, indicated that there had been full discussion between Learning Skills and Communication Arts faculties on this issue; he offered his hearty endorsement.

Mr. Grossman's query as to whether the proposed name change represents a prelude to eventual inclusion of the Department in the College of Arts and Sciences brought a rejoinder from Mr. Tower that this performance would be neither a prelude nor an overture. Mr. Morse noted that naming and placement are both under consideration but should be regarded as separate issues. In response to Mr. Heubel's inquiry about possible rethinking of the division between English and Learning Skills, Mr. DeMent and Mr. Morse noted that the two departments have staked out different territories and developed a good relationship based on close cooperation. President Matthews, Mr. Evarts, and other senators boasting eight-year memories attempted to recall the original purpose of naming the composition program Learning Skills. They noted the original expectation of more remedial activity than has proven necessary, the projected broader skill-development mission than has proven feasible, and the desirability of distinguishing between this program and the old Rhetoric and Literature sequence. All concurred that Rhetoric is a more accurate nomenclature for the Department as it now exists, especially in view of the educational background and scholarly interests of its faculty, who are actively engaged in rhetorical research.

The discovery that the name Rhetoric, originally considered too specific a title for a department assigned wide-ranging skill development functions now accurately represents the program as it exists raised questions about departures from the Senate's original charge to the Learning Skills Department. Reading the original seven-item charge and explaining the ways Learning Skills now meets those responsibilities, Mr. Morse indicated that his Department recognizes the functions assigned to it and is trying to accomplish even those purposes which have been subordinated to composition. He said his faculty would try to perform all seven tasks to the best of their ability, although he expected that other departments would continue to operate skill-development programs in their subject areas. He did not share Mr. Christina's concern that the title Rhetoric might signal a retreat from the Department's original commitments to the teaching of reading and writing.

Noting that the Learning Skills/Rhetoric proposal will be eligible for a vote at the March 12 meeting, Mr. Matthews called for introduction of the second motion from the Academic Policy and Planning Committee. Mr. Kleckner, seconded by Mr. Eberwein, offered the following resolution to establish a new faculty rank:

MOVED that the Senate recommend to the Board of Trustees that it establish a new rank of Emeritus (or Emerita) Professor to honor distinguished faculty

members upon retirement; that it undertake a study to determine appropriate honorific perquisites for retired professors so designated; and that it approve the awarding of emeritus rank under the following conditions:

Title: Emeritus (a) _____ (title held or promoted to upon retirement; for example. Emeritus Professor of Chemistry.)

Purpose: To honor retired faculty who have made significant long-term contributions to Oakland and to encourage a continuing relationship with the University.

Eligibility: In order to be eligible to be considered for award of this title, a number of conditions must be met. The faculty member must have been awarded tenure or job security at Oakland University, and must have spent a continuous lengthy period of full-time service (normally at least ten years) at Oakland University ending in retirement. Retirement is here defined as the intention on the part of the individual to reduce her/his commitment to her/ his discipline and/or the world of work generally to substantially less than a full-time basis.

Procedure: Nominated by the individual's academic dean after seeking the advice of the appropriate unit(s) and committees; recommended by the Provost and President; confirmed by the Board of Trustees.

Mr. DeMent traced the history of this proposal, noting that the idea has been under consideration by various groups for several years. Nothing emerged from earlier deliberations, as the APPC and Steering Committee got bogged down in the matter of identifying perquisites appropriate to the emeritus rank, a thorny issue this year's APPC has evaded by asking the Senate to approve the establishment of emeritus professorial rank but not to designate particular benefits. Appropriate agencies may work out details in the process of negotiating normal and special retirement benefits. He urged timely action by the Senate, in view of impending retirements of distinguished senior faculty members, and indicated that the APPC heartily approves this resolution. Mr. Heubel elaborated on these statements, recalling lengthy debates both about perquisites of faculty retirees with or without emeritus rank and about the degree of exclusivity intended.

Mr. Bertocci and Mr. Stevens worried about possible restriction of the new title to persons already full professors upon retirement. They hoped that meritorious service would gain recognition even for persons whose type of appointment would preclude normal professorial appointment, Mr. Hetenyi indicated that some institutions award emeritus rank at whatever point job security begins. Mr. Ghausi, wishing to limit the title to tenured faculty, moved that the resolution be amended by deletion of the words "or job security" between "tenure" and "at Oakland University in the Eligibility section (Moved, Mr. Ghausi; Seconded, Mr. Eberwein).

Mr. Christina suggested another amendment to clarify the faculty's contractual right to appoint persons to any professorial rank. Mr. Heubel, seconded by Mr. Ketchum, moved to amend the main motion by substituting the words "upon the recommendation of the appropriate academic unit(s)" after "academic dean" for "after seeking the advice of the appropriate unit (s)." Mr. Grossman wondered who is actually going to resolve all the thorny issues. Mr. DeMent maintained that they must be settled in negotiations and stressed that the APPC

intends emeritus rank as a special honor, not a routine acknowledgement for all retiring stalwarts.

Proceeding to the final item of new business, the Chair called upon Mr. Hetenyi, who moved Senate approval of the Constitution of the School of Performing Arts (Moved, Mr. Hetenyi; Seconded Mr. Eberwein). Mr. Hetenyi detailed the steps taken by the Faculty Council to prepare and scrutinize this Constitution and noted that Performing Arts faculty have had ample opportunity to review it. He particularly emphasized Mr. Bertocci's contributions in drafting the document and bringing it into conformity with constitutions of the College and other schools.

Mr. Ketchum discovered a redundancy on page 4, item v.a., which suggests a needless distinction between the Faculty and Assembly. He suggested that the Faculty Council consider deleting the words "or the Faculty," since all are included in the Assembly. He also inquired about CAP membership in the School next year, if there should still be only one department. He wondered whether all tenured Music professors would automatically serve on the CAP. Mr. Hetenyi saw no problem, however, as there are persons whose primary appointments are in the School of Performing Arts itself, rather than any department. He thought it probable, in any case, that there would be another department in the School by next year. This proposal, like the two preceding motions, will be eligible for final vote at the March meeting of the Senate.

There were no private resolutions for the good of the order, so the Chair took the opportunity to elaborate on informational items. He particularly underscored the Admissions Committee's recommendation that the full name of Oakland University be emblazoned on all promotional materials for Meadow Brook events and promised to pursue the matter with responsible officers. He enjoined all persons to make a point of saying Oakland University rather than simply Oakland when speaking or writing.

Mr. Matthews noted President-designate Champagne's response to the Senate resolution of welcome. He looks forward enthusiastically to the arrival of the new presiding officer. Meanwhile, business continues on University committees, and Ms. Jaworski is carrying out duties begun by Mr. Johnson on the Transportation Committee.

Upon the motion of Mr. Beardman, both physical and verbal, the Senate adjourned at 4:15 p.m., with members coming forward privately to congratulate Mr. Matthews on successful completion of his term as presiding officer.

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

