



OAKLAND UNIVERSITY SENATE

OAKLAND UNIVERSITY SENATE

Thursday, January 15, 1981
Fourth Meeting
128-130 Oakland Center

MINUTES

Senators Present: Arnold, Beardman, Bieryla, Brown, Chipman, Christina, J. Eberwein, R. Eberwein, Edgerton, Evarts, Feeman, Felton, Fullmer, Garcia, L. Gerulaitis, R. Gerulaitis, Ghausi, Grossman, Hammerle, Hetenyi, Hitchingham, Jones, Ketchum, Kleckner, Lentz, Matthews, Miller, Mitra, Moeller, Mourant, Obear, Pettengill, Pine, Schmidt, Somerville, Stevens, Strauss, Tower

Senators Absent: Bertocci, Boulos, Butterworth, Caligiuri, Cameron, Gardiner, Griffith, Heubel, Horwitz, Jaymes, Johnson, Karasch, Kingstrom, Liboff, McMahan, Otto, Ozinga, Pak, Pierson, Riley, Scherer, Schwartz, Shepherd, Wilson

Interim President Matthews called the meeting to order at 3:12 p.m. Professing himself tired of talking about the budget and having nothing else in particular to announce, he proceeded at once to the business at hand. The minutes for the December 11, 1980, Senate meeting were approved by voice vote (Moved, Mr. Hetenyi; Seconded, Mr. Jones).

A. Old Business:

1. Motion from the Teaching and Learning Committee (Moved, Mr. Miller Seconded, Mr. Bertocci):

MOVED that the Senate recommend to the President and the Board the formation of a Teaching Consultant position at Oakland University to help faculty members resolve teaching problems and develop or diversify their instructional competence. The Consultant shall:

- a. Provide assistance to any faculty member at that person's request: consulting, observing, and making recommendations to help the faculty member resolve instructional problems in the context of the instructor's teaching goals. At no time shall the Consultant impose counsel on anyone;
- b. Maintain scrupulous confidentiality and completely separate his/her office from reappointment, tenure, and promotion review evaluations;
- c. Report annually to the Senate on his/her activities, indicating the number of faculty members consulted but not identifying specific persons or departments;
- d. Be a tenured member of the faculty, serving 1/2 or 2/3 time as Consultant but continuing to teach each semester of a three-year consultancy appointment; and
- e. Be appointed by the Provost upon nomination by the Teaching and Learning

Committee, which will poll the faculty for recommendations before identifying and interviewing candidates.

Mr. Gerulaitis launched discussion of the Teaching Consultant proposal by inquiring where we are going to find this Solon. The Chair made no claim to know.

Mr. Grossman wondered how the Teaching and Learning Committee could assure separation of the consultancy from the review and reappointment process; he anticipated that a candidate could volunteer the information that she or he had sought out such help and that such statements might come to be conventional parts of review dossiers. Mr. Fullmer suspected that department chairs might frustrate the intended system by either forbidding their faculty from seeking consultation or pressuring them into arranging such help. Mr. Miller reported that his committee was more concerned with protection of privacy by the Consultant. He supposed that an individual faculty member could volunteer information about the process but doubted that chairpersons would intervene.

Mr. Feeman raised questions about how one person could accomplish all that this position demands, given the variety of teaching needs in a university so complex as this. Mr. Miller indicated that the Consultant would attend to teaching processes rather than content and would help the instructor resolve his problems without trying to direct a solution. Mr. Eberwein asked whether other Michigan universities have such consultancies and, if so, whether they are specialized in function by disciplines. Mr. Miller noted a complex center fulfilling related functions at the University of Michigan and cited one-person consultancies in liberal-arts colleges in the midwest. He offered further information about the Earlham College experience based on his telephone conversation with a former Teaching Consultant there.

Questions arose on several fronts about the applicability of such a consultancy to conditions at Oakland. Mr. Chipman asked how much study the Teaching and Learning Committee had conducted into teaching-improvement processes already existing within departments, and he worried that a Consultant might tend to distance discussion of instructional concerns from department colleagues. Mr. Miller admitted the lack of well documented research on the nature and extent of instructional problems here but observed widespread concern with instructional quality. He felt that the Consultant could provide more sustained help than departmental colleagues. Mr. Edgerton reported the results of his informal survey of six present or former department chairs none of whom recalled being asked for teaching help by any colleague. Mr. Mitra, however, felt that a mechanism now exists informally for fellow faculty members within each discipline to provide such help.

Ms. Hitchingham inquired how the committee could measure this program's success if implemented. Mr. Christina saw no direct correlation between the Teaching Consultancy as proposed and good teaching. He recommended that Oakland University imitate Earlham College's eleven-to-one faculty/student ratio. The motion was defeated by voice vote.

2. Motion from the Teaching and Learning Committee (Moved, Mr. Miller Seconded, Mr. Bertocci):

MOVED that the Senate recommend to the President the establishment of an annual Award for Teaching Excellence to recognize outstanding teaching at

Oakland University. The recipient shall be nominated by a group specially appointed by the Teaching and Learning Committee, shall be honored by the President at University commencement exercises, and shall receive a financial award when funds are available.

Mr. Miller offered interested Senators a full copy of his Committee's proposal with all its procedural details. No further discussion ensued, and the motion was approved unanimously.

B. New Business:

1. Resolution of appreciation and commendation from the Steering Committee (Moved, Mr. Obear; Seconded, Mr. Hetenyi):

WHEREAS George T. Matthews has served Oakland University since the Fall of 1979 as Interim President, enriching campus vocabularies with the verb "IPing" which will always be warmly associated with his period of service; and,

WHEREAS Mr. Matthews has successfully navigated "the Good Ship Oakland": piloting the University through troublous times, keeping it steady on its proper academic course, and guiding it toward the apparently safe harbor of a new presidency; and

WHEREAS Mr. Matthews has signified his respect for the University's governance procedures by presiding in person over all meetings since November, 1979, and keeping his colleagues apprised of the view from the Oblong Office; therefore be it

RESOLVED that the University Senate thanks Mr. Matthews for his services as Interim President which have enhanced the welfare and morale of this University and that the Senate, moreover, takes this occasion to commend him for his multitudinous contributions to the University Senate as one of its founding members, as an active participant throughout its history, as long-time secretary of the Senate and its Steering Committee, and as its presiding officer.

Mr. Obear offered a stylistic critique of the resolution, tracing echoes of Mr. Matthews' distinctive prose and anchoring the central metaphor in the Interim President's commitment upon taking office to "keep the Good Ship Oakland on an even keel, even as it sinks." The Steering Committee, impressed with Mr. Matthews' success in meeting this goal and even improving upon it, proposed this resolution of thanks. Following Mr. Gerulaitis' suggestion, the Senators ratified the motion with general applause.

2. Resolution of welcome from the Steering Committee (Moved, Mr. Obear; Seconded, Mr. Hetenyi):

WHEREAS Joseph E. Champagne has accepted appointment by the Board of Trustees as President of Oakland University and will assume office in March, 1981; and,

WHEREAS Mr. Champagne brings to this University an impressive record of public service and educational-administrative accomplishments at Purdue University, the University of South Carolina, and the University of Houston; and

WHEREAS the faculty, students, and administration of Oakland University expect that Mr. Champagne will provide resourceful leadership for the University, maintaining and strengthening its academic excellence; therefore be it

RESOLVED that the University Senate welcomes Mr. Champagne as President of Oakland University and presiding officer of the Senate, pledges to work responsibly with him for the betterment of the University, and urges all members of the Oakland University community to support him in carrying out the responsibilities he now assumes.

The resolution was approved unanimously by voice vote and will be transmitted to Mr. Champagne. Mr. Matthews expects his successor to preside over the March meeting of the Senate.

C. Good and Welfare; Private Resolutions

After expressing so much goodwill in approving an Award for Teaching Excellence, a resolution of thanks, and a resolution of welcome, Senators offered no further proposals for the good of the order.

D. Information Item:

Mr. Matthews noted that Ms. Sakai will replace Mr. Stern on the Academic and Career Advising Committee for the Winter, 1981, semester. The Senate adjourned at 3:50 p.m., on Mr. Beardman's recommendation.

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

January 19, 1981
To: Jane D. Eberwein
Secretary, University Senate
c/o Department of English, WH
From: George T. Matthews, Interim President

I would like to respond appreciatively to the University Senate's resolution enacted recently in my behalf. Perhaps the following could be included in the minutes or agenda for the next meeting

TO MY COLLEAGUES IN THE UNIVERSITY SENATE AND THE STEERING COMMITTEE

I appreciate most sincerely the warm and cordial sentiments expressed by you on my behalf in the resolution adopted recently by the University Senate. In corroboration of the statement made at the time by Mr. Obear, I do recall having said on the occasion of my appointment that I would try to keep our academic ship on an even keel even as it sank. Clearly, our frail barque has not yet foundered; a happy circumstance I do not attribute to my skill at iping for I am certain that other persons could have ipen just as well. [I regard the form "ipped" as effete; I also resist the tendency to double the "p" on the grounds that the verb is not of old Germanic provenance but of Mandarin Chinese origin.] I do not think our vessel is going to disappear

beneath the surface of the scholarly sea. I am confident that it will reach safe haven.

Without further flourish, let me say again, "thank you."

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