



OAKLAND UNIVERSITY SENATE

Oakland University Senate

Third Meeting.
November 13, 1975

Minutes

Present: Alt, Barnard, Barron, Bertocci, Burke, Cameron, Coffman, DeMont, Doane, Evarts, Freeman, Genyea, Hampton, Hetenyi, Heubel, Hovanesian, Johnson, Karasch, Keegan, Ketchum, Klein, Matthews, Moberg, Obear, Paslay, Pogany, Russell, Scherer, Schluckebier, Schuldenberg, Schwartz, Shack left, Shantz, Strauss, Swanson, Swartz, Tower and Voight
Absent: Atlas, Chernov, Cowlshaw, Felton, Gardiner, Hamilton, Hammerle, Hitchingham, Keelin, Liboff, McKay, McKinley, Moeller, O'Dowd, Ruscio, Seeber, Torch, Tucker, White and Williamson

Mr. Obear presided in the absence of Mr. O'Dowd.

Mr. Obear called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m. On the motion of Mr. Hetenyi, seconded by Mr. Shacklett, the minutes, of the meeting of October 9, 1975 were approved by voice vote. Attention was then directed to the formal agenda.

A. Old Business

* 1. From the Agenda of October 9, 1975, Motion 1, unamended:

Motion carried by voice vote.

* 2. From the Agenda of October 9, 1975, Motion 2, unamended:

Motion carried by voice vote.

5. From the Agenda of October 9, 1975, Motion 3, unamended:

Motion withdrawn with the consent of the Senate to a procedural motion from Mr. Tower, seconded by Mr. Matthews.

Thanks to Mr. Harvey Arnold for his efforts in connection with the above measures

* 4. From the Agenda of October 9, 1975, Motion 4, unamended:

Motion carried by voice vote.

* 5. From the Agenda of October 9, 1975, Motion 5, unamended, but perfected at this meeting upon suggestion of Mr. Burke to excise only "and departmental" from the charge in question, thus neatly tidying up the tidy types and providing yet another example, albeit modest, of the truth that pride goeth before a fall.

Motion carried by voice vote.

B. New Business

1. Mr. Shacklett moved and Mr. Tower, seconded the measure as follows:

MOVED THAT THE UNIVERSITY SENATE ENDORSE THE EFFORTS OF THE UNIVERSITY CONGRESS TO ESTABLISH A BAN ON SMOKING IN OAKLAND UNIVERSITY CLASSROOMS AND THAT THE UNIVERSITY SENATE RECOMMEND THE PROMULGATION OF SUCH A BAN.

Discussion was immediate and lively. Mr. Bertocci inquired whether the University Congress had systematically polled its membership. Mr. Alt said that Congress relied upon letters and informal opinion survey. Mr. Genyea wished to know what the present policy in regards to smoking might be. Mr. Coffman and Mr. Swanson replied that at present "no smoking" was explicitly the policy only in certain high risk areas, such as the Barn Theatre or New Charter parachutes and nets room in Vandenberg.

Mr. Hampton wondered how such a ban could be enforced; Mr. Shantz argued that we should promulgate such a ban only if the University were serious and willing to impose penalties; Mr. Heubel pointed out the motion is only a recommendation and that others would have to implement and enforce. Mr. Barren felt a statement of policy clearly enunciated and publicized was needed, rather than an absolute ban. The question of building maintenance was discussed, which discussion got off on the subject of food and beverage in classrooms.

Mr. Hovanesian, seconded by Mr. Moberg, then offered an amendment to insert "and consumption of food and beverages" between the words "smoking" and "in" in the main motion.

Mr. Genyea spoke against the amendment on the grounds the main point was health not building maintenance. Mr. Heubel argued the motion to amend was not germane to the main motion.

Mr. Obear asked Mr. Hovanesian to withdraw the amendment as not germane, which Mr. Hovanesian was unwilling to do. Mr. Obear then ruled the motion to amend as not germane to the first part of the main motion which was to "endorse the efforts of the University Congress to establish a ban" which efforts did not include consideration of food and beverages in classrooms. Mr. Hovanesian was assured he could advance his own motion at the appropriate time.

Mr. Hetenyi called for point of order and the Chair's ruling was sustained.

Mr. Barren seconded by Mr. Hetenyi, then offered an amendment which would eliminate the

period at the end of the main motion and add in the absence of a policy acceptable to all individuals involved in classroom activity.

First Reading.

2. Upon request of the Chair, Mr. Curtis Chipman presented on behalf of the Academic Standing and Honors Committee, which he chairs, the report *Academic Probation and Dismissal Policy for Undergraduates* dated October 20, 1975.

Under rules of informal consideration, Mr. Chipman introduced the proposed new policy and procedure for probation and dismissal.

Mr. Russell observed that the formula seemed to require higher GPAs than the current graduation requirements, and that this didn't seem right. Mr. Chipman replied that the proposed policy isn't much different than the current policy which requires that not only should a student make progress towards a GPA of 2.00, but that he receive credit in three out of every four courses that he takes. The formula is the same as is currently used; its effect is to require linear progress from an API of at least 1.40 at 0 credits to an API of at least 2.00 at 80 credits and thereafter. The effect of the T for transfer students is to scale this progress at a faster rate considering the credits transferred so that the 2.00 at 80 credits is still achieved.

Mr. Burke inquired, how this new policy might affect the number of students in probation and dismissal categories. Mr. Chipman responded that unfortunately no sure answer can be given to this question. OIR data are not structured to yield this information easily. The critical question is the average number of N/WN grades existing on an individual student's records. If the current high GPA were the result of inflation due to "judicious" use of the N grade, the impact could be noticeable. However, OIR data since 1970 when the N grade was first created show no surge in GPAs. GPAs have remained fairly stable over the last five years although increasing slightly. If one assumed that N/WN grades were fairly evenly distributed an API computed for Fall 1974, grades would yield an average API of about 2.37 for freshmen and of about 3.02 for seniors. Both of these are comfortably above the minimal averages required for these students.

Despite this uncertainty about the number of students on probation an increased number would be acceptable if we were able to lessen the number of students reaching dismissal by a more timely warning.

Mr. Hampton confessed to his own difficulty in understanding "mathematical" terms involved and wondered about the difficulty of students understanding the new policy and how they could be advised. Mr. Chipman replied that no one likes any dismissal policy since its implementation signals not only the student's failure but ours as well. But an essential ingredient must be a well defined line of unacceptable academic progress; current policy fails to this this in practice. By current policy there are two cliffs, one for GPA and one for N grades. If these two lines were equally understood one would expect that when people fell off, unfortunate as that may, their falls would be relatively equally distributed between the two cliffs. This is not the case; practically all dismissals result from violating the N grade policy. One may presume that the notion of a required average is only too well understood while that of a proportion of N grades only too little. A goal of the proposed policy is a single cliff whose proximities are clearly defined.

Ms. DeMont inquired why S/WS grades are converted at 2.0? After all, they could represent much higher levels of academic performance. Mr. Chipman rejoined that it is true they could, but then again they may not. The Committee would prefer to err on the side of pessimism rather than the side of optimism. This reflects the experience of the Committee which finds that students who have fallen off the cliff are often times too far out to sea by the time they are noticed under the current policy. In Fall, 1974, according to OIR memo #11, supplement #2, there were 3.6% S grades for freshmen. This number is expected to decline to an even smaller amount in the future. In the Department of Mathematical Sciences, for example, the large pre-calculus program is now being numerically graded; the LS courses at the freshman level are converting to numerical grading. The S/WS will probably have minimal effect in the future.

Considerable concern was expressed for students on probation unfairly as a result of S grades. Mr. Chipman shared this concern and went on to say that as with any policy, there will always be specific cases where we don't like the way the policy works. One would expect that students would appeal successfully to have the probation rescinded in case genuine inequity was apparent. But, Mr. Chipman continue he had not seen a single probation appealed in almost two years of sitting on the Committee. This seems to indicate that the early warnings we give now are not taken very seriously.

To a question concerning the affect of probation on financial aid, Ms. Keegan indicated that many of the full need grants are available under the sole condition of continued enrollment.

Mr. Cameron, somewhat bemused, wished to know whether the policy and procedure, current and proposed was really as complicated as it sounds. Mr. Chipman replied that it was not as complicated as it sounds. A full third of the submitted report applies to a transitional policy for students already enrolled and would thus be absent after several years. Again the argument given earlier indicates that a required average is fairly well understood. Also the Committee recognizes its responsibility under a possible implementation to clearly communicate the policy to new students. This is why the proposed implementation date is not set until the fall semester of 1976. The Committee would need the time to work with both the Computer Center and the Advisory Office to make the needed changes such as having the API appear on the grade slip, prepare new documents for students, etc.

Mr. Tower expressed concern that the Academic Policy Committee's redefinition of the N grade legislated last year which enabled N graded courses to be considered as completed courses might be compromised by elements of the proposed new policy. Mr. Chipman agreed some rephrasing was needed. Indeed, as was mentioned in the initial presentation, much of the rationale and need for a new policy comes from the fact that a student receives an N/WN in a course only after he has had a full half semester to interact in the course, take tests, etc. As such, performance in the course should be considered as a serious attempt to earn graduation credit and inability to do so must be noted.

Mr. Hetenyi, seconded by Mr. Alt, moved that the University Senate recommend to the President the adoption of the report from the Academic Standing and Honors Committee entitled *Academic Probation and Dismissal Policy for Undergraduates*, dated October 20, 1975.

The Chair ruled the motion as substantive and as in first reading at this meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 5:05 p.m. on motion of Mr. Hetenyi, seconded by Mr. Shacklett.

Office of the Provost/j
November 20, 1975

#These minutes are not a verbatim transcript. They are a reconstruction of the main lines of debate. *Ex post facto* clarification has been added sparingly in the critical area covered by the Russell-Chipman initial exchange in the interest of accuracy in understanding the proposed new policy. The secretary wishes to thank Mr. Chipman for his assistance in the preparation of these minutes.

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