



OAKLAND UNIVERSITY SENATE

Oakland University Senate

8th Meeting
April 5, 1972

MINUTES

PRESENT: A quorum

ABSENT: Ms. Covert, Titus; Messrs. Barthel, Brieger, Cafone, Coon, Dahlmann, Dovaras, Gibson, Glass, Gruber, Haskell, Hetenyi, Hill, Hough, Howes, P.J. Johnson, Kent, Light, Mittra, Powell, Riley, Seeber, Susskind

President O'Dowd called the meeting to order at 3:40 p.m., and introduced Ms. Terry, and Messrs. Becker and Glass as new senators from the University Congress.

Mr. O'Dowd then commented that after some thought he was unable to recommend to the Board of Trustees approval of the Senate actions to abandon the PL-229 requirement, and the action to increase the graduation requirement to 128 credits. Mr. Evarts, seconded by Mr. Tomboulian, then moved to reconsider the Haskell amendment adopted at the March 28th meeting which increased the graduation requirement. The motion to reconsider was successful, and on a voice vote the graduation requirement was returned to 124 credits. On the matter of PL-229, Mr. O'Dowd invited Messrs. Heubel and Marz from the Political Science faculty to prepare a case for abandonment of PL-229 for presentation to the Board of Trustees.

The question then arose as to whether the requirement of 124 credits which is stated as a "minimum" requirement in fact permits schools or departments to require more than 124 credits. Messrs. Tomboulian, McKay and Chernoff commented that the "minimum" requirement was intended to permit a student to present more than 124 credits if he or she decided to do so, not to permit departments to require more. In practice, 124 was both the maximum and minimum which could be required as part of a degree program. There was general consensus that this was in fact true.

No new agenda was prepared for this meeting, since there was more than enough unfinished business left on the March 28th agenda. The numbers below therefore refer to items on the March 28th agenda.

Item B2. Mr. Witt, seconded by Ms. Gerulaitis, moved that a Department of Speech Communication be established in the College of Arts and Sciences. Mr. McKay again offered the services of the University Planning Committee in examining such proposals in the future. He suggested that a number of questions should be considered in planning such proposals including matters of budget, prospective enrollment, need for the program, availability of faculty, etc. Dean Matthews commented that he believed the role of the University Planning

Committee should be to suggest the questions which should be asked and answered in the preparation of the program, rather than to attempt to deal with all the questions themselves. There seemed to be general agreement on this point.

Item B3. Mr. Witt, seconded by Mr. Evarts, moved item 3, a, b, c, the motion to discontinue the use of Freshman Exploratories to teach writing and substitute instead a proficiency standard. Mr. Burke asked whether the Advisory Committee on the proficiency standard was intended to be a University-wide committee; Mr. Witt replied that it was intended to include predominately Arts and Sciences faculty, but would contain at least one member from each of the other Schools and Colleges. Mr. Burke further noted that the APC had not included the College of Arts and Sciences Assembly's stipulation that the proficiency standard should be set so that not less than 50% of the entering freshmen would pass it. He then urged that the Senate not debate this point, but said that the Advisory Committee should feel bound by the expressed wishes of the Arts and Sciences Assembly. The Senate then proceeded to debate the question anyway, at great length.

Mr. Obear stated that in his view it was appropriate for the Senate to review the Assembly action, since the writing requirement is imposed on all students in all colleges. Ms. Tripp stated that, out of her considerable experience in teaching freshmen composition, not more than 20% of the students can proceed without further instruction in writing. Mr. Marz commented that he would be more successful in teaching if he did not have to spend so much time teaching composition in his political science courses. Dean Matthews said he was unable to speculate exactly what percentage of freshmen students would be exempted from the requirement by the proficiency committee.

Item B4. Mr. Witt, seconded by Mr. Evarts, moved to establish a Department of Composition within the College of Arts and Sciences. Mr. Matthews, seconded by Ms. Hirschfeld, moved to change the name of the department to the Department of Learning Skills Development. Ms. Hirschfeld commented that instruction in use of the library should be included in all courses. Mr. Marz and Mr. Shantz commented that while they supported a change of title to reflect a broader charge than simply teaching composition, the proposed department must not lose sight of its primary obligation to teach students to write. Mr. Tomboulian, seconded by Mr. Marz, moved to change the name of the department to "Communication Skills Department." Mr. Schillace, seconded by Mr. Marz, moved to add to the motion:

THAT THE INSTRUCTION OF STUDENTS IN WRITING SKILLS AND THE DEVELOPMENT AND CERTIFICATION OF COMPETENCE IN ENGLISH COMPOSITION BE COMPARATIVELY AND EMPIRICALLY EVALUATED BY A TEAM OF APPROPRIATE UNIVERSITY FACULTY STAFF AND THAT THE ANNUAL WRITTEN RESULTS OF SUCH AN EVALUATION BE SUBMITTED TO ALL INTERESTED AND APPROPRIATE UNIVERSITY GROUPS;

AND THAT THE EVALUATION TEAM COORDINATE ITS EFFORTS THROUGH AND BE ACCOUNTABLE TO THE SENATE TEACHING AND LEARNING COMMITTEE WHO SHALL COMMISSION, MONITOR AND REVIEW THE WORK OF THE TEAM.

Dean Matthews, seconded by Mr. Obear, moved to eliminate the words "in the College of Arts and Sciences" and to substitute "under the jurisdiction of the Provost's Office" for the

administrative location of the department.

Mr. Russell then said "let's call it a School then," seconded by Mr. Evarts.

Meeting adjourned at 5:40 p.m.

Submitted by: James E. Davis, Secretary
University Senate

