



# OAKLAND UNIVERSITY SENATE

## **Oakland University Senate**

Meeting of February 5, 1970  
3 p.m., Room 128-30, Oakland Center

### ***AGENDA***

Submitted by Frederick W. Obear, for the Steering Committee.

Please note that this meeting and all future meetings of the University Senate will begin at 3 p.m., half an hour earlier than has been our prior custom.

#### **A. Old Business**

##### **1. Recommendation from the Academic Policy Committee (Mr. Hildum)**

The Senate is asked to approve the creation of a new university course. This recommendation was reviewed by the Senate on December 4, 1969, was passed over at the meeting of January 13, 1970, and is now eligible for final vote.

##### **a. UC 04 UNIVERSITY FORUM (2 CREDITS)**

A STUDY OF A SUBJECT OF TOPICAL IMPORTANCE AND INTEREST CONCENTRATING ON A DIFFERENT THEME EACH TERM. VISITING EXPERTS, FILMS, AND CURRENT VIEWS WILL BE ESSENTIAL TO THE COURSE, WHICH IS DESIGNED TO SERVE A LARGE NUMBER OF STUDENTS IN THE LECTURE FORMAT.

OPEN TO ANY STUDENT WHO HAS COMPLETED 28 OR MORE CREDITS, MAY BE REPEATED ONCE FOR A TOTAL OF 4 CREDITS.

b. A STUDENT WITH 4 CREDITS IN THE UNIVERSITY FORUM MAY ELECT NOT TO TAKE THE SENIOR COLLOQUIUM. IF HE ELECTS TO TAKE BOTH THE FORUM AND THE COLLOQUIUM THE FORUM CREDITS MAY BE TREATED AS ELECTIVE CREDITS.

Comment: It is anticipated that the University Forum will be offered in the fall and winter semesters and that class will meet only once a week for the duration of a given semester. The Committee recommends that both the faculty member directing the Forum and the co-director receive released time for coordinating the course; the co-director's job will be to plan the Forum for the following term.

The Committee recommends that a University Forum Committee be created consisting of the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences or his deputy (as chairman), the director and co-director, and five students serving for one year. This advisory committee will (1) assist in selecting the theme for each Forum; (2) work with the director in managing the Forum; and (3) assist the chairman in identifying and selecting future directors of the Forum. It is also recommended that the Forum be provided with a secretary and adequate budgetary support.

## 2. Recommendation from the Academic Policy Committee (Mr. Hildum)

The Committee recommends that the Senate approve a change in the university distribution requirements which would substitute a symbolic systems requirement for the present foreign language requirement. This recommendation was reviewed by the Senate on January 13, 1970 and is now eligible for final vote.

a. THAT THE SENATE APPROVE A UNIVERSITY REQUIREMENT IN SYMBOLIC SYSTEMS TO REPLACE THE PRESENT UNIVERSITY REQUIREMENT IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE. THE NEW REQUIREMENT IN SYMBOLIC SYSTEMS WOULD READ AS FOLLOWS:

"ALL STUDENTS ARE EXPECTED TO GAIN SOME FAMILIARITY WITH THE STRUCTURE AND USE OF A SYSTEM OF SYMBOLS OTHER THAN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE. THIS REQUIREMENT MAY BE SATISFIED BY EARNING 8 CREDITS IN ANY OF THE FOLLOWING WAYS:

1. TWO COURSES IN ANY ONE FOREIGN LANGUAGE,
2. TWO 4-CREDIT COURSES IN COMPUTER PROGRAMMING.
3. ANY 8-CREDIT COMBINATION OF COURSES IN LINGUISTICS, MATHEMATICS, SYMBOLIC LOGIC, OR PHILOSOPHY OF LANGUAGE. THE COURSES SPECIFIED BY THIS REQUIREMENT MAY BE USED SIMULTANEOUSLY TO FULFILL ANY OTHER UNIVERSITY OR DEPARTMENTAL REQUIREMENT FOR WHICH THEY ARE APPROPRIATE."

b. THE SYMBOLIC SYSTEMS REQUIREMENT SHALL NOT HAVE A SEPARATE HEADING IN THE CATALOG BUT SHALL BE INCLUDED IN THE LIST OF UNIVERSITY DISTRIBUTION REQUIREMENTS.

c. THE VARIOUS COLLEGES ARE ASKED TO MAKE APPROPRIATE CHANGES IN THEIR RESPECTIVE CATALOG SECTIONS TO ACCOMMODATE THIS NEW REQUIREMENT.

d. THE APPLICATION OF THE SYMBOLIC SYSTEMS REQUIREMENT SHALL BEGIN WITH THE GRADUATION IN DECEMBER 1970. THIS DELAY IS NECESSARY IN ORDER TO ALLOW DEPARTMENTS WISHING TO REQUIRE OF THEIR GRADUATES MORE, OR MORE SPECIFIC COURSES IN THIS AREA TO ENACT THE NECESSARY MAJOR REQUIREMENTS.

Comment: The Academic Policy Committee feels that a number of factors are working to make a change from the two-year foreign language requirement desirable: (1) Many among both faculty and students find our curriculum too prescriptive, limiting the free choice of students and to that extent reducing their motivation to learn. (2) It is clear that a significant number of students are simply serving time in language courses. This includes not only those who have a serious, though little understood, disability for foreign languages, but a much larger number who are simply not interested. Even more than most other areas of knowledge, languages require a private willingness to use them or they fade rapidly. (3) Many of our departments are now prepared to say that extensive foreign language training makes no particular contribution to their specialty. In the absence of Senate action, we could anticipate separatist movements that would make life pointlessly complicated for the half (or more) of our students who change majors in mid-career. (4) Increasing enrollments press most severely on courses which, like those in foreign languages, require small sections. Faculty expansion to meet such special demands leads to oversized departments with limited choice of teaching assignments. We have already moved to avoid this development in the writing area by the introduction of the freshman exploratory program.

In changing the requirement, APC wanted to reduce the amount of prescription in the curriculum, but at the same time to preserve those values we found most essential in the old requirement. We take it that its foremost contribution, as distinct from the results of a history, literature or area studies course, is in drawing the student outside of his own system of symbols. Even if details should later desert him, he has found another form of expression, and in the process has understood a little better the nature of symbols and the structure of his own language, together with its basic arbitrariness. While the time-honored and most complex form of such learning is a second natural language, it would seem that the other formal systems examined in the courses listed above will serve as well, and with the advantage of heightened motivation for many students.

APC wishes to emphasize that this legislation is not intended as an isolated action, but is rather an urgent first step in what we hope to make a general revision of curriculum.

A note on jurisdiction: Although alternative readings of the present foreign language requirement are semantically justified, the APC, on historical evidence, takes it that the earlier Senate legislation placed it concurrent with, if not clearly under, the university course requirements, intending only those variations between departments set up by categories in that legislation, or by the desires of particular departments to be more stringent. Under that reading, the present change is clearly within APC's province. For reasons of efficiency stated above, we wish to maintain a university-wide standard for the symbolic systems requirement, and at the same time to reassert this point by its placing in the catalog.

## B. New Business

### 1. Recommendations from the Academic Policy Committee (Mr. Hildum)

The Committee recommends the approval of two related motions concerned with the change in designation in the university distribution requirements from Non-Western Civilizations" to "Area Studies", and the addition of the course "Introduction to Latin America" to the options for fulfilling that requirement.

a. THAT IN THE UNIVERSITY DISTRIBUTION REQUIREMENTS, THE TERM "NON-WESTERN CIVILIZATIONS" BE CHANGED TO "AREA STUDIES".

b. THAT A COURSE "UC 068: INTRODUCTION TO LATIN AMERICA" BE ADDED TO THE AREA STUDIES OPTIONS.

**Comment:** In making this recommendation the Academic Policy Committee assumes that the central values in this university requirement are two-fold: (1) acquaintance with a region and culture markedly different from one's own; and (2) learning to approach such a new situation from a number of different intellectual viewpoints at the same time. These values seem equally well-served by area studies of Africa and Latin America as by studies of Asian areas. We understand that the university now has the personnel to offer a Latin American course and we support it as an added option for students.

## 2. Report of Steering Committee activities (Mr. Obear)

a. Chancellor O'Dowd has informed the Steering Committee that he will recommend to the Board that Mr. Obear be named Acting Provost and assume full responsibility for those areas of the university which have been the traditional concerns of the Provost. Mr. Obear has, as a consequence of this appointment, assumed the chairmanship of the Steering Committee. Matters for the consideration of the Steering Committee or for transmission to the Senate Agenda should be submitted to the Steering Committee through Mr. Obear in the future.

b. Chancellor O'Dowd will also recommend to the Board that Mr. Sturner be named Acting Vice Provost and assume the traditional areas of responsibility of the Vice Provost. Members of the Steering Committee express their appreciation and thanks to Mr. Sturner for his efforts as chairman of the Steering Committee for the past several months.

c. The resignations of the students from the Senate and the university committees, and the student proposals for changes in university government have raised issues which are beyond the scope of the original charges to the *Ad Hoc* Committee on Constitutional Review. The Steering Committee has agreed to dissolve that committee pending a major review of university government. In the interim, an informal committee chaired by Mr. Gerulaitis and consisting of Mr. Davis, Mr. McKay and Mr. Graham has been appointed to serve as a liaison with the various student organizations. The Steering Committee will take no action to fill vacancies on the Senate or the committees until some proposals are forthcoming from the students.

d. The Steering Committee has sent copies of "A Proposal for Change at Oakland University" (the Springfield Report) to the Academic Policy Committee and to the Academic Standing and Honors Committee requesting their evaluations of and comments on this proposal.

e. The Steering Committee has solicited nominations for a commencement speaker and for candidates for honorary degrees from the deans of the various colleges and will transmit its recommendations to Chancellor O'Dowd.

f. The Steering Committee has approved a recommendation from the School of Performing Arts that the course prefix designations of the Ashkenazy and Perlman Master Classes in piano

and violin be changed from MBM (Meadow Brook Music) to SPA (School of Performing Arts). The courses will be offered in the 1970 Summer Session and will be the same as the courses previously offered during the summer of 1969.

FO:JD:gr

cc: Deans, chairmen and directors of academic and administrative departments

Office of the Dean of Students

Oakland University student newspapers

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