

Oakland University Senate
November 12, 2009
Minutes

Members present: Aistrop, Awbrey, Bertocci, Berven (D), Chamra, Chen, Chopin, Cole, Connery, Doman, English, Free, Gillum (for Folberg), Gilson, Graetz, Grimm, Grossman, Guessous, Hightower, Jackson, Jhashi, Keane, Kim, Kruk, Latcha, Leibert, Lemarbe, Mabee, Marks, Medaugh, Mitton, Moudgil, Norris (for Thompson-Adams), Osborn, Penprase, Piskulich, Riley-Doucet, Russell, Schweitzer, Schartman, Southward, Spagnuolo, Switzer, Tissot, Tracy, Voelck, Walters, Wells, Williams

Members absent: Berven (K), Eis, English, Giblin, Izraeli, Licker, Mili, Miller, Pedroni, Polis, Sudol, Tanniru, Tardella, Wood

Summary of Actions:

1. Informational Item:
 - Student Retention—Ms. Awbrey
 - Final Grade Appeal Procedure—Mr. Shablin
 - Graduate Council Approved Combined Degree Template—Ms. Awbrey
2. Approval of minutes of 10-15-09. Mr. Latcha, Ms. Walters. Approved.
3. Motion to approve new B.S. program in Actuarial Science. Mr. Grimm, Mr. Tracy. First reading.
4. Motion to approve policy on transfer of credit from a non-regionally accredited institution. Ms. Osborne, Mr. Tracy. First reading.
5. Motion to endorse resolution regarding placing names of OU academic units on campus buildings. Ms. Jackson, Mr. Meehan. First reading.
6. Motion to staff Senate standing committees. Mr. Grimm, Mr. Russell. Approved.

Mr. Moudgil called the Senate to order at 3:15. Ms. Awbrey was invited to present the first informational item—an update on student retention. The presentation addressed several aspects of the retention issue, beginning with the reasons that retention is vital to the institution. She noted that the budgetary implications of retention are significant, citing that a 5% increase of students generates upwards of 3.5 million dollars in revenue. She gave comparative statistics of retention rates of Michigan institutions, as well as comparative graduation rates. Various issues were raised, including median ACT scores and recruitment strategies. The latter include four key areas: strong national reputation for quality; engaged faculty; outstanding facilities and resources; student scholarships and grants. See [full presentation](#) for detailed statistical information. Ms. Awbrey also referred to the NSSE survey data, which reflected areas that OU needs to work on, particularly in student-faculty interaction. She concluded that while it is important to pay attention to the type of student coming into the institution, it is equally important to understand that what we do with those students matters.

Mr. Moudgil underscored the issue of faculty-student mentorship in anchoring students in the university. Engaging students in research projects is not necessarily dependent on financial resources, but in many cases it is person-to-person contact that can make a difference. Mr. Leibert asked whether graduate student retention was part of the data presented; Ms. Awbrey

said that it was not but that a similar analysis on graduate students could be presented at another time. Ms. Tissot posed a question regarding student scholarships, wondering about the numbers of scholarships going to incoming freshmen and older students. Ms. Snyder was available to answer the question, and pointed out that the changes made at OU to offer 4-year renewable scholarships have contributed to higher retention rates. Ms. Tissot observed that current sophomores and juniors are having difficulty in obtaining scholarships. Ms. Snyder encouraged those students to consult with individual departments to see what opportunities are available, and noted that information about all OU scholarships should be available on-line. Mr. Russell then inquired about the no-loan policy in regard to current and future freshmen. Ms. Snyder indicated that the “100% tuition guarantee” need-based program will continue for the incoming class in 2010 and will be evaluated year-by-year to make sure that it is effective in keeping students in school.

The next informational item was presented by Mr. Shablin: a final grade appeal procedure to set time limits for the appeal process. UCUI and Graduate Council have supported the new process, which includes important revisions: the appeal process must be completed within the published timeframe, for example, fall grades must be appealed by the end of the subsequent winter semester; in the event that an academic program publishes more stringent time limits, those time limits will take precedence; student, instructor, department chair, and dean responsibilities are described in detail. Mr. Shablin noted that the process will be printed in both the undergraduate and graduate catalogs, and that faculty, staff, and students will be notified of the new procedures effective Fall 09 semester. Mr. Medaugh asked for clarification regarding the ten-day period mentioned in step 2 under student responsibility; Mr. Shablin responded that it is ten days after the initial contact with the instructor.

Ms. Awbrey presented the next informational item, a template approved by Graduate Council and UCUI for combined bachelors and masters programs (5th year masters) that will provide opportunities for high achieving students to complete a bachelor’s and masters degree in less time. It is an articulated curriculum that combines existing degrees in the same or different departments, and requires a proposal approved by UCUI, Grad Council, and the Provost. She then outlined the requirements for admission, noting that 12 graduate credits are taken at UG fees, thus offering a cost savings.

The secretary took the roll call. Mr. Moudgil recognized the three student representatives who serve on the Senate: Ms. Tissot, Mr. Aistrop, and Mr. Medaugh, then recognized the newly-appointed Dean of the School of Engineering and Computer Science, Dr. Louay Chamra.

A motion to approve the [minutes](#) of the October meeting was made by Mr. Latcha, seconded by Ms. Walters, and approved.

Without old business, Mr. Moudgil turned to the first item of new business. Mr. Grimm moved the following:

MOVED that the Senate recommend to the President an Board of Trustees approval of a Bachelor of Science major in Actuarial Science.

In addition to providing a second for the motion, Mr. Tracy gave a summary of the [program proposal](#). The proposed major is a joint venture between the Department of Mathematics and Statistics and the Department of Economics in the School of Business Administration, and has been approved by the Deans of the College and SBA. Students take a demanding set of courses in both departments and are encouraged to take two sets of exams (one after the junior year, the other after graduation). Students who pass both exams are positioned well in the job market. Approximately three to five students per year are expected to pursue the major because of the rigorous demands of the program.

Mr. Bertocci asked whether this program would be unique among the public institutions in Michigan and whether additional faculty are necessary for specialized courses. Mr. Tracy remarked that the University of Michigan has offered a program for many years; Central and Eastern Michigan Universities also offer a degree. MSU offers a concentration within the Math department. Further, Mr. Tracy explained that one course in risk management is unique to the program, and that it can be taught by three OU faculty members. It will be offered during summer semesters so as not to interfere with F/W teaching schedules, and will be cross-listed with MBA courses.

The next item of new business was moved by Ms. Osborne and duly seconded by Mr. Tracy.

MOVED that the Senate approve the following policy on Transfer of Credit from a Non-Regionally Accredited Institution:

If a prospective student from a non-regionally accredited institution meets OU admissions requirements, they will be admitted to Oakland University. The student's credits from prior non-regionally accredited colleges and universities will be accepted according to the following policy:

Oakland University may accept for transfer those credits for which a grade of 2.0 (on a four-point scale) or higher was earned from institutions with candidacy status from a regional accrediting agency or from other accredited institutions provided that: 1) the institution grants a baccalaureate or associate degree; 2) the institution is a recognized member of CHEA; 3) the courses presented for transfer are shown to have equivalency or are determined to be of traditional academic nature and are acceptable to an Oakland University department; and 4) the institution's courses are taught by faculty with a masters degree or above.

Ms. Awbrey explained the rationale for the policy, noting that the federal government has informed regional accrediting agencies that it is no longer sufficient for institutions to say they will take transfer credits only from other regionally accredited institutions; rather, an institution must have criteria in order to take those credits and also indicate how it will deal with credits from non-regionally accredited institutions. The Higher Education Re-Authorization Act (DOE) demands that the criteria need to be made public, and with that in mind, UCUI has formulated the policy.

Mr. Russell questioned whether the institution must have faculty with masters degrees or above, or whether the individual courses in question be taught by such faculty, and wondered how that

could be enforced. Ms. Awbrey replied that it is the standard of the institution and not the individual course. Mr. Russell asked whether that is true of OU; Ms. Awbrey indicated that according to the NCA OU meets that standard, and that to her knowledge there are no credit courses at OU taught by someone without a masters degree. Mr. Grimm asked what CHEA refers to; Ms. Awbrey clarified the acronym – Council for Higher Education Accreditation. Mr. Grossman inquired whether the word “may” allows for an OU faculty member or administrator to deny acceptance of the transfer credit. Ms. Awbrey indicated that individual departments do have this discretion. Mr. Meehan asked about the Higher Education Re-Authorization Act and wondered whether there are other issues stemming from that act that will affect OU. Mr. Shablin reminded him that the request for textbook information is part of the same act. Ms. Awbrey was not aware of any other issues but observed that the motivation for much of the Act was to make financial aid available to a wider number of students. Mr. Tracy offered an amendment to bullet #4 to reflect that it is the institution’s policy that courses are taught by faculty with masters degree or higher. Ms. Jackson made the point that since OU does not have a written policy regarding faculty possessing masters degrees or higher it would be difficult to monitor other institutions. We have no written policy, according to Ms. Awbrey, but we would be out of compliance with our national accreditor if that were the case. Mr. Russell reiterated the idea that it is the general standard of the institution and not the qualifications of the individual instructor that is the primary issue. Ms. Awbrey stated that there is flexibility in the policy since a department can make the ultimate decision. Without a second, Mr. Tracy’s motion to amend the policy was withdrawn.

The next item of new business was moved by Ms. Jackson and duly seconded by Mr. Meehan:

MOVED that the University Senate endorse a resolution to the Board of Trustees requesting that the names of the College of Arts and Sciences and each professional school be placed on the building that houses their main administrative offices.

College of Arts and Sciences -- Varner Hall

School of Education and Human Services -- Pawley Hall

School of Engineering and Computer Science -- Dodge Hall

School of Nursing -- O’Dowd Hall

School of Business Administration -- Elliott Hall

School of Health Sciences -- Hannah Hall

Ms. Riley-Doucet inquired about the addition of the ERI to the list, and Mr. Moudgil indicated that it was possible to iron out details later.

The final item of new business was moved by Mr. Grimm, duly seconded by Mr. Russell, and approved by the Senate.

MOVED that the persons below be appointed to the committees designated:

Senate Planning Review Committee

Frances Jackson (SON) – through 2011 *Chair*

Shravan Chintala (ERI) – through 2010
Alberto Rojo (CAS) – through 2012
George Stoffan (CAS) – through 2011
Gautam Singh (SECS) – through 2010

Senate Budget Review Committee

Gwendolyn McMillon (SEHS) – 2009-2010
Gary Moore (SON) – 2009-2010
Sandy Pelfrey (SBA) – 2009-2011
Shea Howell (CAS) – 2009-2011
Mike Latcha (SECS) – 2009-2012
Kevin Murphy (SBA) – 2009-2012

No issues surfaced for the Good and Welfare. A motion from Mr. Tracy to adjourn was approved at 4:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Tamara Machmut-Jhashi
Secretary to the University Senate

posted 12/3/2009