

# Senate Minutes

## September 21, 2023

Provost Rios-Ellis called the hybrid meeting to order at 3:10 P.M.

### SUMMARY OF INFORMATION AND ACTION ITEMS

#### INFORMATION ITEMS

- a. Graduate School Submissions
  - i. Master of Science in Information Technology Management - General Focus (MSITM-General Focus), New Instructional Delivery Method to provide addition of fully online delivery. Department of Decision of Information Sciences, School of Business Administration (Vijayan Sugumaran)
- b. Undergraduate Program Submissions
  - i. Program Modification to the Wellness and Health Promotion, B.S. program to rename and revise a Public Health, Bachelor of Science (B.S.) providing an opportunity for accreditation and increase student enrollment; Department of Public and Environmental Wellness, School of Health Sciences (Caress Dean)
  - ii. Modification to the Wellness and Health Promotion, B.S. to Accelerated Second Degree B.S.N. Pathway to rename and revise a Public Health, B.S. to Accelerated Second Degree B.S.N. Pathway program providing an opportunity for accreditation and increase student enrollment; Department of Public and Environment Wellness, School of Health Sciences (Caress Dean)
- c. Combined Graduate School and Undergraduate Submissions
  - i. Modification to the Wellness and Health Promotion, Combined B.S./M.P.H. program to rename and revise a Public Health, Combined B.S./M.P.H. program providing an opportunity for accreditation and increase student enrollment; Department of Public and Environment Wellness, School of Health Sciences (Caress Dean) .
  - ii. Undergraduate and Graduate Combined Programs Policy Update providing students an opportunity to complete a bachelor's and a graduate degree in less time than would be required if the two degrees were done independently. (Brandy Randall & Kristin Landis-Piwowar)
- d. Strategic Planning Process
- e. Mental Health Ad Hoc Committee Update
- f. Update the Senate Committee (Co)Chairs for the Senate Record

Academic Computing Committee  
Sam Srauy

Academic Conduct Committee  
Laila Guessous  
Raquel Prieta  
Julian Rushi  
Elysa White

Academic Standing and Honors Committee

Nicole Asmussen Mathew

Faculty Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee

To be determined

Assessment Committee

Austin Murphy

Dale Telgenhoff

Budget Review Committee

To be determined

Campus Development & Environment Committee

Steve Stanton II

Classroom Use & Scheduling Committee

Drake Dantzler

Community Engagement Committee

David Dulio

Disability & Literacy Committee

Jo Reger

Christina Papadimitreou

General Education Assessment Committee (GEAC)

Kevin Laam

Lan Jiang

General Education Program Revision Ad Hoc Committee

To be determined

General Education Committee (GEC)

Adolfo Campoy-Cubillo

Adina Schneeweis

Graduate Council

Brandy Randall

Honorary Degree Committee

Amy Banes-Berceli

Intercollegiate Athletics Committee

Melissa McDonald

Library Committee

Kate Rougeau

Mental Health AdHoc Committee

Jessie Hurse

Susan McCarty

Planning Review Committee

Lori Burrington

Research Committee

Michael Kranak

Sara Arena

Senate Elections Committee

Tamas Horvath

Service Learning Committee

Rebecca Cheezum

Student Academic Support Committee  
Tara Diesbourg

Teaching & Learning Committee  
Changiz Mohiyeddini

University Calendar Ad Hoc Committee  
To be determined

University Committee on Undergraduate Instruction  
Kristin Landis-Piwowar

#### g. Provost's Updates

#### **NEW BUSINESS (ACTION ITEMS)**

- Election of the Senate Steering Committee for the 2023-2025 term - Senate Elections Committee (a link to vote will be shared via ZOOM chat or in person ballot)
- Procedural Motion to staff Senate Standing Committees: Updates and Changes to previous year

#### **A. INFORMATION ITEMS**

On behalf of President Ora Pescovitz who would be joining the meeting at a later time, Provost Rios-Ellis welcomed everyone officially to the first OU Senate meeting of the year.

She then appointed Mike Latcha as Senate parliamentarian, Dikka Berven as Senate secretary, and the Senate Elections Committee which will be made up of Tomas Horvath (CAS), Ken Mitton (ERI) and Ronald Piscotty (SON).

- She then moved on to the Information Items, providing an opportunity for any questions or comments regarding Information Items 5a-c above. There were none.
- Strategic Planning Process: Josh Merchant was present to explain the ongoing Strategic Planning process. He noted that the background for this process is OU's Mission, Vision and Values statement. He pointed out that the current plan was launched in 2015, and said that the new one will build on it as well as re-imagine Oakland University for the future. He explained the 'Baldrige Process' which focuses on several elements including leadership, strategy, customers, workforce, results and measurements. He informed the Senate that there have so far been 300 interviews among various groups from which a common theme emerged, which is engagement. He reminded the Senate that the OU goals for 2025 were student success, research, community engagement as well as diversity, equity and inclusion. He said that these will be the foundation of the new plan which will be a 4-phase project to include (1) Environmental scan, (2) Decision-making, (3) Execution, and (4) Assessment and Revision. He provided a detailed description of the process to be used and the individuals who will be involved, as well as the timeline for the overall project. He announced that the launch will be next week. In a nutshell, he said Phases 1-3 will be this year, and Phase 4 is planned for the fall of 2024.
- Mental Health AdHoc Committee: Susan McCarty was present from the Senate Mental Health Ad Hoc committee with a message which she described as urgent because there has already been a student suicide this year. She informed the Senate that the only

administrator in the Counseling Center was laid off last year which means that there is a lack of an administrator at the front desk when students come seeking help. The laying off of this administrator had in turn put extra pressure on the full-time counselors as well as created a situation that is not serving students well. She said that she believes it is critical for OU to do more to provide support as soon as possible. David Schwartz (OU Counseling Center) was also present to provide his insights into the situation. He said that he understands the university budget problems, and he thanked everyone who supports the Center. However, he provided data to show that OU is the lowest staffed counseling center in the state of Michigan, and one of the worst staffed counseling centers in the USA. He said the average ratio of counselor/student is 1 full-time counselor for 1328 students, but at OU it is 1 full-time counselor for 3096 students. He informed us that they have already had frustrated students unable to get the help they needed in the Center, and in addition, they have had a 50% turnover of staff over the last two years due to burnout. He declared that OU needs to hire three full-time counselors to get up to average. He stated that data shows how important a good Counseling Center is to any campus. He noted that he and his colleagues have prepared a proposal which they hope will be funded. He pointed out that students with mental health issues are more likely to drop out, and so on top of being an urgent mental health issue for students, it is also a serious retention issue for the university.

Mary Craig expressed her concern about this topic, and subsequently made the following motion:

***MOVED*** that the Oakland University administration triple the Oakland University Counseling Center staff, or if that is not possible, at least to double it.

The motion was seconded by Gwen McMillon.

Mr. Dinda then asked if the Counseling Center can collaborate with SHS counseling program to add more counselors. Mr. Schwartz said that they are already doing that, but they can only have so many graduate students, and supervising graduate students takes time that they don't have.

The motion was then rephrased:

***MOVED*** that the Oakland University administration supports a resolution to solve the issue of the Oakland University Counseling Center staffing.

Gwen McMillon seconded the motion.

Dean Ball said that he thinks there needs to be a collaborative and interdisciplinary approach to this matter, with which Mr. Schwartz agreed. Ms. Reger observed that we need to hire professionals because the solution is not with graduate students which would be a short-sighted solution. Ms. Farooqi said that from a student perspective, the information that there is nobody at the counseling desk when students come for help is frightening. She stated that in her opinion, there needs to be unlimited free counseling for students. She asked when the Mental Health Ad Hoc committee would be meeting. Ms. McCarty said that last semester was primarily a data-gathering period during which they did not meet, and this year they plan to meet soon. Ms. Chaturi said that student mental health should be a priority for Oakland University. Ms. Lewis stated that she has data to show that depression and anxiety are on the rise at Oakland University.

**The motion passed unanimously** (58 yes, 0 no).

- Welcome from the President: President Pescovitz had arrived during this presentation to welcome Senators to the new year. With reference to the previous topic of mental health, she said that she is concerned about student mental health and she intends to work to

find more resources to support efforts to resolve the problem. She said she was glad to be invited to the Senate for their first meeting. She expressed her enthusiasm for the leadership role that she sees the Senators taking in the last several years. She said she was thrilled that the Senate has become more pro-active which makes Oakland University a better institution. She said she believes that the 26 senate committees do a great deal to inform and shape the university. She observed that the hybrid format seems to have created record attendance at the Senate meetings. She said that the Senate Steering Committee is a faculty committee, and conduit to her which she sees as a key component of shared governance on the campus. She said she wants the channels of communication always to be open. She also observed that in the last couple of years there has been a record number of action items on the Senate agenda. She said that she is proud of these accomplishments and looks forward to the upcoming year. She also informed Senators that the Wall Street Journal had just come out with a new ranking system according to which Oakland University came out high in a number of areas, of which the most important area to her is in the area of social mobility where OU ranked first among all Michigan universities, and 91<sup>st</sup> in the USA out of 400. She noted that the metric where OU was second in the state of Michigan was the value of a college education which is good, but she hopes we can rise even higher.

- Update on Senate Committees: Associate Provost Banes-Berceli said that with reference to the update on the Senate Committees, the information is on the Senate website, and if there are questions about the committees, they should be directed to the committee chairpersons.

#### **Provost's Updates**

- Provost Rios-Ellis urged everyone to look for the ballots to vote on the updates to the Senate constitution.
- She pointed out that many people on campus are wearing green bandanas which is a sign of support for mental health.
- She reminded Senators that the Hispanic Heritage events are going on with interesting special events throughout the month, such as the upcoming talk by Ruth Enid Zambrana which she encouraged everyone to attend.
- She asked Senators to keep track of the programs available in CETL.

## **B. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES of May 18, 2023**

The minutes of the meeting of May 18, 2023 were approved (52 yes, 0 no).

## **C. NEW BUSINESS**

### **1. ELECTION OF SENATE STEERING COMMITTEE for the 2023-2025 term**

The election was conducted by Tomas Horvath and Ronald Piscotty.

The nominations were opened, and seven Senators were nominated.

When there were no more nominations put forth, the motion was made to close the ballot.

**MOTION:** *MOVED to close the ballot* (Edrisinha, Lewis)

The vote was then conducted. The following Senators were elected:

Sumi Dinda (SHS)  
Andrea Eis (CAS)  
Laila Guessous (SECS)  
Amy Rutledge (SBA)  
Ken Mitton (Eye Research Institute)  
Jason Wasserman (SOM)

Provost Rios-Ellis congratulated them and welcomed them to the Senate Steering Committee.

## **2. PROCEDURAL MOTION to staff Senate Standing Committees**

***MOVED*** that the persons outlined on the list (above) be appointed to the committees or the positions designated (*Trivedi, Eis*)

The motion was approved (48 yes, 1 no).

## **D. GOOD AND WELFARE**

Provost Rios-Ellis announced that she plans to do the State of Academic Affairs on Valentine's Day 2024.

Ms. Glover said she would like to address the Information Items (b and c) involving Public Health. She said these matters were discussed in pre-COVID times, but there is a new Dean in the SON now and these matters should come back to the SON for discussion because the times have changed. She added that there is concern that the pathway to an accelerated second degree is called a program on the agenda, but she said it actually can't be called a program because the Board of Nursing has to approve the proposal first. Provost Rios-Ellis explained to all present and especially new Senators that the normal procedure during the Senate meeting is that she will always provide an opportunity for participants to comment on Information Items in the early part of the meeting but that it was fine for this concern to be brought to the attention of the Senate at this meeting during Good and Welfare.

## **E. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:15 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,  
Dikka Berven (Senate Secretary)