



OAKLAND UNIVERSITY SENATE

OAKLAND UNIVERSITY SENATE

Thursday, 11 April 1985
Sixth Meeting
Gold Room A and B

MINUTES

Senators Present: Berger, Bertocci, Burke, Cass, Chapman-Moore, Chipman, Christina, Copenhaver, Downing, J. Eberwein, R. Eberwein, Edgerton, Evans, Evarts, Grossman, Hammerle, Hart-Gonzalez, Hartman, Hildebrand, Horwitz, Hough, Ketchum, Kleckner, McCabe, Moorhouse, Russell, Scherer, Schimmelman, Strauss, Tomboulian, Tomilo, Tripp.
Senators Absent: Appleton, Boganey, Brown, Butler, Bledsoe, Carbone, Champagne, Coppola, Eliezer, Federlein, Frankie, Garcia, Gerulaitis, Heubel, Howes, Lindell, Moore, Pine, Pino, Schwartz, Shichi, Snider-Feldmesser, Splete, Tracy, Wagner, Windeknecht.

Summary of Actions:

1. Minutes of 14 March 1985 (Tripp; Strauss). Approved.
2. Motion concerning establishment of a fund to support computing innovations in instruction (Downing; Splete). Approved.
3. Amendment to modify the Downing / Tomboulian amendment on transfer admission by adding the word "ordinarily" (Hildebrand; R. Eberwein). Approved.
4. Amendment to incorporate more specific language into Transfer section of proposed admission policy (Downing; Tomboulian). Approved.
5. Amendment to strike the word "normally" from section III.B.2 of proposed admission policy (Russell; Tomboulian). Approved.
6. Friendly amendment to modify phrasing of the Chipman / Russell amendment to the proposed admission policy (Hildebrand). Accepted.
7. Amendment to add the word "regional" to the Chipman / Russell amendment (Bertocci; Hough). Defeated.
8. Amendment to incorporate a statement on operating procedures into the proposed admission policy (Chipman; Russell). Approved.
9. Motion to approve a new undergraduate admissions policy (Hildebrand; Chipman). Approved, as amended.
10. Friendly amendment to substitute 28 for 29 credits as the eligibility requirement for proposed S/U grading option (Chapman-Moore). Accepted.
11. Amendment reducing course exclusions in proposed S/U grading option (Russell; Burke). Defeated.
12. Amendment changing cap on S/U elections from 8 credits to 20% of a student's total credits (Russell; Copenhaver). Defeated.
13. Friendly amendment adding distribution requirements to the list of exclusions (Grossman). Accepted.

14. Amendment to replace S and U grades with Credit and No Credit (Horwitz; Downing). Withdrawn by sponsors.
15. Amendment to substitute 8 credits earned for the same number attempted (Burke; Hart-Gonzalez). Not carried in tie vote.
16. Motion to introduce S/U grading options (Downing; Horwitz). Approved, as modified by friendly amendment.
17. Motion nominating faculty members to positions on the Senate standing committees (Edgerton; Hildebrand). Approved.

Mr. Kleckner called the meeting to order at 3:17 p.m., calling immediately for consideration of the minutes of 14 March 1985 (Moved, Ms. Tripp; seconded, Mr. Strauss). These were approved without comment, thereby expediting action on the first of three items of continuing business: a motion from the Academic Computing Committee, which was similarly approved without comment (Moved, Mr. Downing; seconded, Mr. Splete):

MOVED that the Senate ratify in principle the establishment of a fund (comparable to the Educational Development Fund) to be administered by the Academic Computing Committee to support Innovative academic computing uses.

This was the last motion until virtually the close of the session to enjoy such prompt assent.

Next on the agenda came discussion of the proposed new undergraduate admission policy, beginning with a sequence of amendments. The first of these, moved by Mr. Downing and seconded by Mr. Tombouljian, offered detailed new language on conditions of transfer admission for several categories of applicants. Immediately following Mr. Downing's explanation of the parenthetical expression "(with respect to these credits)" in section 1, Ms. Hildebrand, seconded by Mr. Eberwein, proposed to amend section 3 to incorporate the word "ordinarily" between "will" and "be" in order to allow the Admissions Office discretion in unusual cases. This amendment was approved, as was the modified Downing / Tombouljian amendment:

MOVED that section IV of the proposed undergraduate admissions policy be amended to read:

Admission of transfer students from other accredited colleges or universities shall be based on the following criteria:

1. Applicants who have completed 40 or more semester hours of transferable credit and who have a 2.5 or higher cumulative grade point average (with respect to these credits) will normally be admitted.
2. Applicants who have completed 40 or more semester hours of transferable credit with a 2.0 to 2.49 cumulative college grade point average may be admitted to some programs of the University if there is indication of strong motivation and a likelihood of success in Oakland's academic program.
3. Applicants who have not completed 40 semester hours of transferable credit at a college or university will ordinarily be considered for admission based on the criteria for Admission of Freshmen (section II above), assuming that the applicant

has a 2.0 or higher college grade point average.

The other amendment already on the floor was the one offered by Mr. Russell and seconded by Mr. Tomboulion to strike the word "normally" from section III.B.2 of the proposed admission policy, thereby decreeing that all students eligible for the Academic Support Program would be directed to it. When Ms. Hart-Gonzalez inquired the rationale behind this rewording, Mr. Russell indicated that help should always be available to these students. Mr. Kleckner applied the "conservation of loopholes" principle to the amendment, observing that the Senate's addition of one weasel-word to the total document required deletion of another. Mr. Horwitz suggested that the wording could be still further perfected to apply, not to every applicant in the special admissions category, but only to those admitted; Ms. Hildebrand explained, however, that all eligible candidates are referred by admissions officers to Academic Support administrators as applicants for admission to that program so that the original diction remains valid. When Ms. Hart-Gonzalez wondered who might now, abnormally, not be referred for such help and why, she was assured by Norian Johnson that all such candidates are now so referred. The amendment carried by voice vote.

Before the main motion came under discussion, Mr. Chipman (seconded by Mr. Russell) introduced the statement on procedures that he had promised at the previous meeting, offering it as an amendment that would strike the last sentence of Article I from the proposed policy and introduce the extended text that had been distributed with the agenda. His intention was to assign responsibility for worrying about various aspects of the admission policy to specific committees or individual worthies. When Mr. Strauss wondered what would become of this statement, if passed, since it would never appear in the catalog, Mr. Chipman replied that procedures and lines of responsibility would be on the public record. Mr. Strauss then wondered why the Vice President for Student Affairs went unmentioned. Suggesting an avowedly friendly amendment, accepted as such by Mr. Chipman, Ms. Hildebrand then proposed replacing the words "The actual policy" from the first sentence of paragraph two with "This policy" in order to smooth the transition between Mr. Chipman's prose and the document into which it would be incorporated.

A more controversial issue was raised by Mr. Christina, who complained about the lack of specific goals for recruitment of any part of this heterogeneous student body to which the University aspires. He wondered what kind of information about progress could be reported to the Senate by the Provost in the absence of such goals, although Mr. Kleckner assured him that the intent is to attract as many qualified minority students as possible. What, queried Ms. Hart-Gonzalez, constitutes a minority? She asked whether non-traditional students might be so classified? foreign students? women? persons of particular economic status? Pointing out that his statement eschewed the word "minority," Mr. Chipman called attention to the proposed reflection of "the diverse racial, religious, and ethnic backgrounds of society." That, however, raised definitional problems with "society." As Mr. Kleckner pointed out, the term is variously definable?even within federal guidelines. Current University enrollment, he noted, overrepresents women and underrepresents Blacks, Hispanics, Aleutians, Native Americans, and every other federally-tracked group with the possible exception of Eskimos. A reasonable goal seemed to him to be simply to increase admissions from all such groups. The foreign student question struck him as different; he and Ms. Johnson both reported that Oakland University now welcomes all foreign students who meet our admission standards and can support themselves: admittedly, a very small number. Since quotas seemed impracticable, Ms. Scherer proposed modifying language to read "an academic community reflecting diverse racial, religious, and ethnic backgrounds." Mr. Russell argued, in opposition, that "society" at

least suggests numerical proportions while reflection could be accomplished by admitting two specimens of each kind.

The problem of defining society proved intellectually challenging. Ms. Hart-Gonzalez wondered whether the proposers of this policy wished to represent Oakland University as a county, state, regional, national, or international college. Mr. Burke, supported by Mr. Hammerle, maintained that the minority group most lacking here is students from other states?even students from distant parts of this one; they hoped to strengthen recruitment efforts to attract persons from California and Kalamazoo, thus correcting the recent misclassification of this university as a basically regional institution. When Mr. Russell suggested satisfying the Governor's Commission by Identifying "society" as Michigan citizens, Mr. Burke claimed to have found something to vote against. Mr. Bertocci, seconded by Mr. Hough, then proposed amending the amendment by adding the word "regional" to the catalog in the fourth paragraph, only to have Mr. Kleckner ask what a "regional background" might be. Mr. Bertocci thought "the midwest" a suitably vague response. The amendment failed. Mr. Christina continued to express dissatisfaction with condoning the status quo and called for establishment of goals?even so modest a one as retention of current demographic levels.

Reasoning that the document should be supported in the same spirit of generalized good Intent with which it was offered, Mr. McCabe argued against detailed definition of policy in this document. He perceived setting of specific goals as an Admissions and Financial Aid Committee task. Ms. Tripp agreed, recognizing that the Senate could keep amending and expanding catalogs forever. She advocated approval of the original amendment as a broadly focused declaration of intent. Mr. Kleckner suggested that the Admissions Committee should meet early next fall with the Director of Admissions to review with him his recruiting plan for the year, make recommendations, and report back to the Senate. Ms. Hildebrand pointed out that language already exists elsewhere in the policy statement with regard to attraction of distant and even foreign applicants. Thus reassured, the Senate approved the Chipman amendment by voice vote, with a few dissents. It immediately went on to approve the main motion.

Next came an item of resurrected business: a revised proposal from the University Committee on Undergraduate Instruction designed to allow students to elect a limited number of courses on an S/U basis (Moved, Mr. Downing; seconded, Mr. Horwitz). Mr. Downing introduced the proposal by referring to the extensive agenda commentary calling attention to changes made in response to Senate discussion in January. The primary changes he noted came in points 1, 6, and 7. General education "requirements," rather than courses, are excluded from S/U election so that a student who successfully fulfills a general education category with a numerically-graded course may supplement it with an S/U election of another course from the same general education list. Reversability has disappeared from this proposal, although the Registrar is authorized to release numerical grade information, upon petition, to an academic unit requesting that information for internal use. Mr. Bartalucci, a member of the UCUI subcommittee that toiled over this proposal, was cited as considering this arrangement a manageable burden upon his staff unless the Senate should allow each student more than eight S/U credits. Mr. Downing then called attention to the practices of other colleges, as reported by Mr. Bartalucci. Item 7 of the proposal is the only actual novelty; it is a policy borrowed from Michigan State and Eastern Michigan University and is designed to guard against grade-shopping. UCUI leaves some issues open to Senate consideration, such as the 8-credit limit on this option; it is offered to allow trial of such a policy. Ms. Chapman-Moore then offered a friendly amendment, accepted in that spirit by Mr. Downing, to change the point of eligibility

from 29 credits to 28?the official point of embarkation on sophomore standing.

Several persons requested specific information. Mr. Moorhouse, who applauded the motion as an excellent job, asked what might happen to a student who elected a course on this basis, earned an S, and eventually wanted to major in that subject? suddenly needing numerical credit. That contingency, according to Mr. Downing, would be handled by the petition route offered in item 6. Wondering when and how a department might stipulate a course as non-S/U, Mr. Bertocci learned that such a designation in the schedule of classes would preclude any student from electing the course on such a basis. The department is free to limit options whenever appropriate. If the concern is simply to prevent majors and minors from electing the course on an S/U basis, that would be taken care of by the stipulations in item 1.

With the intention of opening up a policy he regarded as far too conservative, Mr. Russell then announced his intention to offer a series of amendments. The first (seconded by Mr. Burke) would delete "general education requirements" from item 1 and place a period after "prerequisites. Promptly identifying this amendment as unfriendly, Mr. Downing declared his aversion to putting general education requirements on a different footing than other requirements for a degree; he feared that the Senate might send a misleading signal to students. Mr. Copenhaver agreed about the folly of establishing such a discrepancy; he would be willing to exclude general education requirements from item 1 only if the Senate were equally liberal in opening major and minor requirements; he discerned no symptoms of such disposition. Although Mr. Russell observed that the general education program offers students a great variety of options in each field group—from which he would like them to select without concern about grades, Mr. Copenhaver pointed out that some general education categories offer less choice than now exists within some majors. Mr. Burke argued that the 2.0 base grade for an S sets a higher achievement standard than generally applies in general education offerings, but Ms. Hart-Gonzalez objected to the impact on university honors of a practice that would allow a student to remove from consideration for that purpose some of the courses taken to demonstrate the expected level of excellence across the curriculum. Mr. Tomilo and Ms. Tripp both feared potential slacking off by S/U students in general education courses; they wished to encourage students to commit the utmost energy to this important work. With Mr. Russell promising that, if this amendment carried he would propose no more, Mr. Burke noted that, as things now stand, few students would be eligible for this proposal at all. When Mr. Edgerton corroborated that statement by pointing out that Engineering students are now wholly excluded. from the S/U option, Ms. Hart-Gonzalez responded that the problem lies within the school rather than the University as a whole. Mr. Horwitz declaring himself torn as the person who originally proposed extending S/U options yet who presides over a school whose students will generally be denied this freedom of exploration, began to think they might have to graduate with more than 124 credits; he argued against the amendment. The amendment failed on a voice vote.

Undeterred and no longer bound by his promise of abstention from amendment, Mr. Russell (seconded by Mr. Copenhaver) then proposed an amendment To replace the 8 credits of S/U election with 20% of a student's total Oakland University credits. He acknowledged that the enlargement of freedom would be a moot point for most students outside the B.G.S. program but commented that his modification would actually have the effect of preventing senior transfer students from overloading on S/U courses here. Mr. Tomilo spoke for the subcommittee that drafted the main motion to point out that his colleagues had considered extending the S/U option but refrained out of concern for pressure on the Registrar's office. Questions arose about how many credits were actually under discussion, with Ms. Tripp

speculating that as many as 24 might be involved. She asked about transfer courses, which Mr. Russell said would be excluded. Recognizing a need for greater specificity, Ms. Tripp noted that the percentage arrangement would lead to interpretation of decimal points, though Mr. Kleckner said that eligibility would stop with 6 rather than 6.9 since our computer knows only integers. Ms. Chapman-Moore reported that the B.G.S. Faculty Council has discussed the issue of S/U credits within that program and not yet arrived at a decision. Restrictions on major credit within the proposed policy may well be applied within General Studies for any courses appearing on the approved plan of work?all of them, in fact, taken after the plan's approval. Mr. Grossman worried about the potential for abuse, given that a percentage is not necessarily discernible until the student applies for graduation and begins filing petitions of exception. When Mr. Downing asked the Registrar's reaction to the 20% cutoff, Mr. Bartalucci greeted it as a totally new idea to which he had no considered response. He did anticipate a problem for a student when making plans without knowledge of her or his eventual credit tally. At what point before graduation would anyone know what 20% actually entails? Although Mr. Russell thought that academic advisers could respond attentively to potential problems, his amendment failed on a voice vote.

With debate focused yet again on the original motion, Mr. Grossman introduced a succession of queries to discern the intent of the proposers. Did the restriction on general education apply also to the new College of Arts and Sciences distribution requirements? Mr. Kleckner assumed that it did; any academic unit is free to add its own general education requirements to the overall University minimum. Mr. Grossman then added a friendly amendment to add college or school distribution requirements to the catalog in item 1. When he then inquired whether major or minor course requirements included all courses mentioned in the catalog that a student must satisfy (including options within groupings), Mr. Downing assured him that it did. Questioning also elicited information that, when a course is dropped with a W, that grade has no influence on the basis on which it could be elected the next time. Another query, resulting in assurance that no credits are counted for a U, introduced a lengthy discussion of U grades. Ms. Chapman-Moore, for instance, wondered whether a student who took one course on an S/U basis, then took another and earned a U, would find an attempt to repeat the second course interpreted as a third S/U election. When Messrs. Downing and Tomilo said that would be the case, Mr. Kleckner suggested changing the verb from elect to earn up to 8 credits, recognizing that an unsuccessful effort yields no credit. Mr. Burke agreed that It would make more sense to stipulate that only 8 credits of S grades would apply to graduation, but Mr. Downing hesitated to encourage accumulation of U grades. Ms. Hart-Gonzalez, thinking a transcript laden with "U"s an unlikely occurrence, thought the suggestion safe.

The thorniest question turned out to involve assimilation of S and U grades into the APIs of students enrolled at Oakland University before fall 1984. Although Ms. Chapman-Moore spoke for UCUI in asserting that this policy was offered to extend a non-invidious option to students, Mr. Chipman thought that the Academic Standing and Honors Committee would still have to integrate U grades into the API. Mr. Bartalucci confirmed that, for students enrolled before this academic year, a U would hurt the API although it would have no effect on the GPAs of more recent arrivals. Mr. Horwitz, noting that Instructors of courses elected under this option might have no idea which students need a 2.0 for minimal credit, worried about the effect on a student still subject to the API of having the equivalent of a 1.0 figured into the record as 0.0. This worry led to speculation, by Ms. Chapman-Moore and others, about the capability of our computer system to distinguish between two categories of U: those with and without numerical equivalents on the Registrar's records. Messrs. Bartalucci and Moorhouse agreed that the computer system is capable of being programmed in such a way, although no-one claimed

confidence that it would be.

After some discussion of this problem, Ms. Hart-Gonzalez wondered whether this policy could be applied only to new students, excluding those still subject to the API; Mr. Kleckner affirmed that it could be. Attempting to resolve the matter in some less drastic fashion, Mr. Horwitz (seconded by Mr. Downing), introduced an amendment to replace all S and U grades for this purpose with Credit and No Credit grades, thereby resolving the API/GPA conundrum by distinguishing these courses from those offered on an exclusively S/U basis. Mr. Kleckner expressed dismay at the notion of adding to the Oakland University grading system two additional symbols that nobody outside the institution will understand. He pointed out that this policy comes before the Senate too late for inclusion in the 1985-86 Undergraduate Catalog and, hence, will not go into effect this fall. Time exists for straightening out these issues, which fall within the province of the Academic Standing and Honors Committee. Mr. Horwitz withdrew his amendment. Impressed with the complexity of the issues, Mr. Bertocci speculated on the effect of tabling the matter until the first Senate meeting of the fall; but, when Mr. McCabe attempted to second his suggestion, he denied having offered a formal motion. Ms. Tripp, lacking a seconder, proposed amending item 5 to add "or API" after "GPA." Mr. Bartalucci indicated that the matter was totally under the control of another standing committee. Mr. Grossman then urged that the Senate pass this motion and let the Registrar formulate plans for its implementation, reporting to the Senate for its go-ahead.

Mr. Burke called for clarification of whether 8 credits were to be elected or earned and (seconded by Ms. Hart-Gonzalez) offered an amendment replacing the words "may elect to take up to eight (8) credits" with "may earn up to eight (8) credits." Still concerned with clarifying that this limit does not include the already existing category of S/U courses, he confessed that he liked the Credit/No Credit suggestion. Ms. Chapman-Moore argued against the amendment, however, citing grim memories of proliferating N grades in the recent past. From an advising standpoint, she apprehended sequential failures resulting in strings of U grades lining up on transcripts. A voice vote on the amendment left its fate in doubt, and several shows of hands demonstrated a tie. The amendment failed, therefore, for want of a majority. Having deliberated at such length, the Senate moved expeditiously at that point toward a vote on the main motion, as twice modified by friendly amendments. It carried without dissent:

MOVED that any undergraduate student who has completed at least 28 credit hours towards graduation may elect to take up to eight (8) credits of course work at Oakland University on an S/U grading basis, assuming that all prerequisites have been completed, and subject to the following conditions:

1. These credits may only be counted as free elective credits. They may not be used to satisfy general education requirements (including college or school distribution requirements), the student's major or minor course requirements or prerequisites, or any courses designated "No S/U" in the Schedule of Classes.
2. Any courses that are designated S/U in the catalog or Schedule of Classes will not count towards the limit of eight S/U credits per student.
3. The student must elect the S/U option by the late registration deadline by filing the appropriate form with the Registrar's Office.

4 Instructors will not be informed on their enrollment lists as to who are the S/U students, if any. They will simply assign numeric grades (0.0 to 4.0) to all enrolled students. For students who have elected the S/U option, the Registrar's Office will then convert numeric grades from 2.0 to 4.0 to an "S" and numeric grades from 0.0 to 1.9 to a "U." An "S" or "U" will appear on the student's grade slip and transcript.

5. Neither the "S" nor the "U" grade will be included in the student's GPA.

6 If an academic unit at Oakland University later requires evidence of a numerical grade point instead of an "S," due to a change of program status, the student may file a petition with the Registrar's Office to release that grade point information to the program requiring the evidence.

7. If a course is repeated, it must be repeated on the same grading basis as the first attempt.

Mr. Kleckner pledged to move toward implementation of this policy at the earliest feasible time.

Last on the agenda came the solitary item of new business: a procedural motion from the Steering Committee nominating faculty members to chair and serve on Senate standing committees in accordance with the list provided on the agenda (Moved, Mr. Edgerton; seconded, Ms. Hildebrand). Mr. Russell identified John Stevenson as the continuing Graduate Council member on the Research Committee; a new member will soon be named by that body to serve for the 1985-87 term. When Mr. Moorhouse inquired why no chair was listed for UCUI, Mr. Kleckner reminded him that the Senate charge to that committee establishes the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Study or the person serving in that capacity (currently, Jane Eberwein) as its presiding officer. With no further discussion, the Senate approved all nominees. Mr. Kleckner then informed his colleagues that annual reports from standing committees are starting to arrive and will be circulated in due course to the Senate.

No private resolutions were offered for the good of the order, adjournment being the prime goal as five p.m. approached. Mr. Kleckner offered two information items. The first concerned the Academic Computing Committee report, now revised according to Senate counsel and distributed with the agenda. All parties appear happy with the results. The second concerned the Graham Health Center and its still uncertain future. Mr. Kleckner assured the Senate that nothing would happen immediately; perhaps nothing will happen even in the long run. Crittendon Hospital has made an informal offer to provide health care for Oakland University students when its new out-patient facility opens. This tentative feeler is likely to be followed, perhaps sometime this summer, with a specific proposal that would precede a detailed study by the hospital eventuating in a yet more detailed proposal for the University to study (probably next winter). At this point, substitution of hospital facilities for the campus medical clinic is simply an idea that seems to bear studying. It might offer advantages to our students that would compensate for any disadvantages. No hasty decision looms.

With business completed for all Senators except those still entangled in Steering Committee duties, Mr. Kleckner then released the members of this most recent Oakland University Senate (the thirteenth?) with thanks for their service. He then dismissed the body, sine die, at 5:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:
Jane D. Eberwein
Secretary to the University Senate

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