

Oakland University Senate
February 17, 2011
Minutes

Members present: Andersen, Bednarski, Berven, D., Berven, K., Chopin, Doman, Eis, Folberg, Grimm, Grossman, Guessous, Hawthorn-Burdine, Hay, Hightower, Insko, Kim, Kruk, Latcha, Leibert, LeMarbe, Lepkowski, Mabee, Marks, Meehan, Miller, Mitton, Moran, Moudgil, Orzbach, Pedroni, Penprase, Piskulich, Russell, Schott-Baer, Schartman, Shablin, Southward, Spaguolo, Switzer, Tardella, Tracy, Wells, Williams, Wood
Members absent: Awbrey, Chamra, Free, Frick, Gallien, Giblin, Graetz, Graves, Jackson, Licker, Polis, Reger, Schweitzer, Sudol, Tanniru, Walters

Summary of Actions:

Informational Items

Online grade change process

Policy #475 Non-smoking

Provost's Update

Unfinished Business

Approval of Statement on Academic Freedom (Mr. Doman; Mr. Meehan)

Approval of Early Education and Intervention/Education Specialist Degree (Ms. Jackson)

Approval of Bachelor of Arts in Creative Writing (Ms. Miller)

Provost Moudgil called the meeting to order at 3:10 P.M.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

1. [Online Grade Change Process](#)—Mr. Shablin

Mr. Shablin expressed his thanks to Mark Doman and his team of students (Cassie Bell, Donna Beauchamp, Staci Brownlie, Nick Hilliard, Michelle Mich and Ed Yates), as well as to Tricia Westergaard and Jennifer Gilroy and everyone who was involved in developing the new streamlined process for [online grade changes](#) which can be found under 'Faculty Resources' on the Oakland University Home Page. [Forms](#) can be found under the 'Forms' menu on the Registrar website.

Mr. Moudgil asked that Kresge Library be added to the list. Mr. Kruk asked what to do if it is after the deadline and a grade needs to be changed. Ms. Westergaard said to go to the Appeal or Petition of Exception, but they are looking for a new process for this as well. Mr. Meehan thanked the committee for the new form, and asked if there will be an auditing practice. Ms. Gilroy affirmed that there would be, and said that they audit all the time. Ms. Miller asked if there is an error in the system (if a faculty member makes a mistake), can the error be

alleviated. Ms. Gilroy said that in this case, a grade change can be submitted, as has been the practice in the past.

2. [Policy #475](#) Non-Smoking—Mr. Roberts

Mr. Roberts from the Office of Finance Administration spoke about the OU no-smoking policy. He introduced and thanked his colleague, Cora Hansen, who had worked on the policy as well. He said that the need to update OU's policy was precipitated by Michigan Law, and the OU policy has now been approved. The policy is that there can be no smoking in any of the buildings on campus or within 50 feet of any building.

Mr. Russell asked if this means that will be more ashtrays placed away from the doors now, and Mr. Roberts replied that there would be.

3. Provost's Update

- Mr. Moudgil said that the ribbon-cutting ceremony for the new Teaching and Learning Center will take place on March 1, and he encouraged everyone to attend. He expressed his hope that the Center will be a good resource for faculty members, especially new faculty members who are sometimes challenged by such things as technology or language issues. The Center will be located between Elliott and Varner Halls.
- Searches are going on in the Honors College and the Office of Research. Mr. Moudgil said that they are now trying to empower the Dean of Kresge Library to hire faculty to teach online courses in the library.
- Mr. Moudgil lamented that the Governor of the State of Michigan was proposing significant budget cuts (15%) for higher education, and said that it is time to start planning now how to keep units and programs in tact. Mr. Moudgil observed that people at other universities are worried as well. It is a very challenging time, and planning is the most important thing. Mr. Pedroni asked what is being done at OU at this time in the way of planning for the upcoming cuts. Mr. Moudgil said that they are planning to highlight the economic advantages provided by Oakland University. Mr. Russell asked if we are also addressing the misconceptions that exist concerning private/public sector salaries. Mr. Moudgil said that they would like to take up that issue. Mr. Russell asked if Mr. Moudgil could discuss the 15% projected budget cut in the context of Oakland University's budget overall. Mr. Moudgil deferred to Mr. LeMarbe who said that the amount mentioned would be approximately \$7,500,000, but in fact, the governor's proposed budget cuts may actually be more like 22%. So the situation could be even worse. The general fund is 180 million dollars. Mr. Russell asked if there are reserves in the general fund. Mr. Moudgil said that discussions of how to deal with the impending budget cuts have not occurred yet, but the warning has been sounded. It is not known yet what type of adjustments will have to be made, but they will be trying to minimize the effect of the budget cuts on academics.

A. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES of January 13, 2011

The [minutes](#) of January 13, 2011, were approved (motion by Latcha, second by Doman).

B. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Statement on Academic Freedom (Mr. Doman; Mr. Meehan)

RESOLVED *that the Senate endorse the Oakland University/Oakland University Board of Trustees Joint Statement on Academic Freedom (second reading)*

Mr. Moudgil reviewed the history of the need for the Joint Statement on Academic Freedom. He thanked the committees involved in merging the two previously existing statements into the present one.

The motion was approved unanimously.

2. Motion from the Steering Committee to recommend approval of the Early Education and Intervention/Education Specialist Degree. (Ms. Jackson)

MOVED *that the Senate recommend to the President and the Board of Trustees approval of a program leading to the Education Specialist in Early Education and Intervention (second reading)*

Mr. Grimm asked whether there was now an updated memo from the Assessment Committee about this degree. Ms. Schartman confirmed that the Assessment Committee had provided their final approval in October in a letter that accompanies the proposal.

The motion was approved unanimously.

3. Motion from the Steering Committee to recommend approval of a Bachelor of Arts in Creative Writing (Ms. Miller)

MOVED *that the Senate recommend to the President and the Board of Trustees approval of a program leading to the Bachelor of Arts in Creative Writing (second reading)*

Senate members expressed their concerns about the letter sent to the Senate on February 16, 2011, from Dean Sudol expressing his position on the proposal for the BA in Creative Writing. Mr. Moran said that this was the first time he had seen a situation such as this in which the entire CAS was in favor of a proposal that the Dean did not approve of. Mr. Moran supported the proposal completely, but wondered what would happen if the Dean did not support it. He observed that nobody from the Dean's office was present at the meeting to answer questions. He expressed his hope that the Senate would support the proposal unanimously. Ms. Wood responded to Mr. Sudol's concern about the difficulty of students getting jobs with a BA in Creative Writing. She said that the programs in Art and Art History have been very successful, and that the Studio Art program has paved the way for the Creative Writing proposal. Mr. Grossman said that he would have liked to discuss the proposal with the Dean at the January 13 Senate meeting, but he pointed out that since Mr. Sudol had left the Senate meeting, it was not possible to do so. Mr. Grossman recommended disregarding the memo from Mr. Sudol since it had come to the Senate so late. Mr. Tracy said that what bothered him was the lateness of the

letter to the Senate, and he said that it shows why a Dean must provide a letter of support or a letter of non-support for proposals. He said that the idea that no letter signifies tacit support is clearly wrong, and he emphasized that there must be a letter from the Dean. He said that the present memo should have no validity at all if there is nobody from the Dean's office willing to be at the Senate meeting to discuss it. Ms. Hawkins expressed her belief that Dean Sudol should have brought up his concerns before the second reading at the Assembly. All they had to go on was that he said there was a 'lack of pizzazz'. She pointed out that the proposal was approved unanimously at the CAS Assembly. She said that she and her committee had made multiple attempts to discuss the proposal with the Dean. She also said that as a result of the situation, the Dean had not forwarded her name for approval as chair of the English Department because of her 'dreadful leadership'. She said that she did not know what to say about the fact that there was nobody from the Dean's office present to discuss the proposal, and she felt that the letter from the Dean had come too late. Ms. Hay said that she found it to be a fantastic learning moment. She said that the committee's work has been done, and she urged the support of the Senate for the proposal.

Mr. Latcha said that on behalf of everyone, especially the Senate Budget Committee, he was deeply offended. He said that the Budget Committee had asked for a letter, but they did not get one. He said they wondered whether the Dean's non-response was to be taken as support as they had been told to assume on a previous occasion. Mr. Latcha said that he could only look at it as a deliberate attempt to subvert the process. Ms. Andersen said that she would speak on behalf of the Planning Review Committee since Ms. Jackson was not present. She said that the Planning Review Committee would welcome Mr. Tracy's suggestion for a letter of support or non-support from the Dean. Ms. Eis expressed her agreement with Ms. Wood's observation that the Studio Art major does work for students. She said that as a member of the CAS Executive Committee, there were many people who had tried to discuss the proposal with the Dean many times, and she expressed frustration that the Dean had not articulated any objections apart from his assertion that the proposal lacked pizzazz. She pointed out that it was not just the English department that was involved in trying to get discussions going with the Dean.

Mr. Russell asked if the proposal is approved, what then will happen next. He wondered whether a program can receive funds if the Dean does not request them. Mr. Moudgil said that we need to have respect for the process, and that he would take recommendations to the president, and from there it would go to the Board of Trustees. He expressed his wish to remain out of the present controversy, and stated his desire for the Senate to do its work. He requested that members stay on topic. Mr. Hoepfner pointed out that if the proposal is approved, the program will not require extra funds because the English Department can implement it immediately in fiction and poetry with existing faculty. Mr. Grossman observed that if the BOT approves the proposal, then the program can be given a curriculum code and students can begin to sign up for it.

Ms. Miller said that she has been deeply concerned about the situation that she saw as a flagrant effort to subvert the process. She said that the English department had created a proposal that was well-devised academically and had no budget constraints, and she thought that they had done an excellent job. She was also very concerned about the many requests for a letter from the Dean, and the lateness of the memo to the Senate from the Dean, and she said that she would

argue that it is not really a letter. Mr. Moran said that he did not think there should be concerns about how many new students this program will attract because there are students presently at Oakland University who want this program. He asked whom we are here to serve, if not our students. He expressed his hope that the Provost would relay the word that contempt had been shown for the process. Mr. Meehan said that he would like to echo the comments of Ms. Eis. He said that many people had tried to help, and he added that it is unfortunate that what should be a happy day for the university because of an excellent proposal is becoming a sad day for the College. Mr. Grossman said that this program will be a good addition to the ads promoting Oakland University on the radio and TV. Ms. Guessous said that she is not in the CAS, and therefore does not know about the issues. But she said that she was dismayed by the lack of a professional tone in Mr. Sudol's letter. She said that everyone should always maintain a professional tone. She thought that the Dean may have a valid point, but the tone of the letter undermined the message. Mr. Moudgil agreed that there should be professionalism in everything that we do at the university. Mr. Meehan ended the discussion by remarking that he wanted to correct a factual error in the Dean's letter—namely, that Women and Gender Studies has had its own major and minor for some time.

The motion was approved unanimously.

C. GOOD AND WELFARE

- Mr. Grimm said that he wanted to thank all the colleagues who spoke up in support of the BA in Creative Writing. He said he wanted to comment on the issue of process. He agreed with those who had said that the Dean had shown contempt, and agreed that many people had worked hard to resolve the situation. He said that it is the faculty that are responsible for creating academic programs, and that the Dean does seem to be subverting the process. The CAS Assembly had voted unanimously to approve the program, but the Dean did not support it. He felt that the Dean was failing to do his job and should resign.
- Mr. Doman said that he would like to publicly acknowledge the role of Tamara Machmut-Jhashi when she was Associate Provost for her contributions in creating the new streamlined Online Grade Change policy.
- Ms. Hay wanted to know where to find the OU sexual harassment policy online and she wondered why it is not posted. Mr. Moudgil said that it can be found with Joy Cunningham's office.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:25 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,
Dikka Berven