



# OAKLAND UNIVERSITY SENATE

## OAKLAND UNIVERSITY SENATE

Thursday, 12 January 1989  
Fifth Meeting

### *MINUTES*

Senators Present: Abiko, Appleton, Barthel, Bhatt, Braun, Brown, Burke, Cass, Chipman, Christina, Coffey, Dahlgren, Downing, J. Eberwein, R. Eberwein, Eliezer, Fish, Frankie, Garcia, Grossman, Haskell, Hildebrand, Hough, Karasch, Larabell, Lindell, Miller, Millwood, Muir, Olson, Pettengill, Pillow, Pine, Schimmelman, Sherman, L. Stamps, R. Stamps, Stern, Theisen, Wedekind, Williamson, Wilson, Witt.

Senators Absent: Beehler, Cardimen, Champagne, Gerulaitis, Hartman, Herman, Horwitz, Jackson, Ketchum, Kleckner, Lauer, Maschke, Murphy, Reddy, Riley, Rosen, Sevilla, Tracy, Tripp.

#### Summary of Actions

1. Minutes of 10 November 1988 (Stern; R. Stamps). Approved.
2. Minutes of 8 December 1988 (Hough; Stern). Approved.
3. Amendment to modify the term of student office (Tripp; Gerulaitis). Approved.
4. Amendment to provide for four student seats (Williamson; Stern). Defeated.
5. Amendment to modify a sentence on membership (Garcia; Stern). Approved.
6. Motion to establish a new standing committee on Human Relations (Hough; Downing). Approved as amended.
7. Motion to reduce credit requirements for the master's degree in Nursing (Brown; Pettengill). First reading.
8. Motion to fill a vacancy on the APPC (Muir; R. Eberwein). Approved.

Discerning a quorum, Mr. Dahlgren identified himself as the Senate's interim presiding officer, replacing Mr. Kleckner who was out of state. He called the meeting to order at 3:15 p.m. and proceeded at once to consideration of two sets of minutes. Those of 10 November 1988 were approved without discussion (Moved, Mr. Stern; seconded, Mr. Stamps) as were those of 8 December 1988 (Moved, Mr. Hough; seconded, Mr. Stern). These actions freed the body to devote its attention to several substantive items of business.

The sole item of old business was an exceptionally complex one: a motion from the Steering Committee to establish a new standing committee on Human Relations (Moved, Mr. Hough; seconded, Mr. Downing). This appeared on the agenda embellished with three amendments, which Mr. Dahlgren presented to the Senate in reverse order before proceeding to a vote on the main motion however it might turn out to be amended. Neither sponsor of amendment d being present (Mesdames Tripp and Gerulaitis), Mr. Stern explained their intention in proposing that the membership specifications of the main motion be amended to describe the term of

student office as "not more than two years." He read the amendment as an attempt to provide flexibility in terms of student service so that interested students could participate even if unable to commit two full years.

Recognizing the likelihood that this committee would have great trouble scheduling its meetings, he argued that this amendment would ease some of the barriers to student involvement. Mr. Downing countered with the observation that a measure of flexibility always exists in that committee members are free to resign. Too much turnover, however, creates difficulties for committee chairs who are constantly obligated to bring new members up to date on work in progress. He pointed out that the purpose of the original proposal was to secure the greatest possible continuity for this important committee (even recognizing the inevitability of occasional resignations and Senate replacements). Following this discussion, the amendment won approval by voice vote--with some dissent.

The second amendment (Messrs. Williamson and Stern) declared that there should be four student seats on the committee. Mr. Stern understood Mr. Williamson's purpose in introducing this amendment as an effort to ensure a substantial student presence on a committee whose greatest area of concern would be with student behavior. Mr. Chipman, opposing the amendment, wondered how this amendment would fit into the original proposal. Would it enlarge the total body by two? Would it add extra appointments to those already afforded the president of the University Congress? Mr. Barthel also inquired about the likely effect of the amendment. Mr. Dahlgren assumed the intent to add extra seats, but Mr. Stern explained that the committee would still have only eleven members, at least four of them students (two named by the Congress president and two by other nominators).

Concurring with Mr. Downing's previous observation on student turnover on committees, Mr. Eberwein applauded the generosity of some Oakland students in dedicating substantial amounts of time to university service but judged it unrealistic to suppose we could ever find four appropriate and active student members in any one semester. He thought the university would be lucky to identify two such. This discussion prompted Ms. Garcia to request the views of student senators. Ms. Stamps, sole student representative present at the meeting, reported mixed feelings. She hoped there would be opportunities for four students to serve if at any time there should be that many eager to contribute but concluded on the whole that the amendment was too idealistic. Mr. Chipman pointed out that other students could participate on subcommittees, and Ms. Muir noted that the university affords other opportunities for students to work toward improved human relations on campus; she hoped people would not limit their sights to this one committee. When put to a vote, the amendment failed.

One other amendment remained on the floor (Moved, Ms. Garcia; seconded, Mr. Stern): a proposal to modify a sentence in the membership section to read "It is expected that minorities, including blacks; women; and students will be represented." Ms. Garcia explained her purpose in detailing these groups. She wanted to specify students and to incorporate the word "black" into the motion since the primary reason for the work that led to establishment of this committee was to relieve racial tensions. Mr. Chipman, declaring the amendment squarely in line with the intent of the motion's authors, assured the Senate that he had no objection. The amendment passed.

Attention then turned to the main motion, doubly amended. Mr. Stern inquired why the motion segmented the academic dimension of university life from its other elements, when

racial tension exists as a pervasive disease on campus. He wondered how students felt about the proposed committee charge. Mr. Chipman responded that the language of this document focuses on the academic side as appropriate to a committee heavily served by faculty members; it would also be concerned, he declared, with broader dimensions of the university's responsibilities. He hoped it would achieve something immediately by calling President Champagne's attention to other trouble areas that needed to be addressed and to push for action on those fronts. He defined this committee's main concern as dealing with ways in which the institution may be failing to achieve its educational goals. Following this discussion, the issue came to a vote and was passed with unanimous support. Thus, the Senate created a new committee with the following charge and membership specifications.

Although universities often consider themselves as idealized communities, they are seldom independent of, and are rarely immune from, deficiencies that exist in the larger societies to which they belong. Consequently, a university should be continually alert to those social problems that can impede its educational goals. Such a set of problems involves those that derive from racial bias, intolerance, stereotyping, and other like manifestations of human beings' inability to deal constructively with those natural differences that exist among them. It is essential that Oakland University maintain continuous and systematic efforts to minimize the negative effects these particular deficiencies have upon the educational experience it seeks to provide, and it is the task of the University Senate Committee on Human Relations to give strong impetus to those efforts. To that end, the Committee on Human Relations is charged:

- a. to consider the total educational climate at Oakland University, and to select for its particular attention those issues that are most directly related to instances of significant under-representation of various community groups wherever they may occur in all of the academic programs of the university,
- b. to set priorities for possible improvements and develop biennial agendas of tasks to accomplish,
- c. to assist university units in establishing priorities, developing approaches to achieve them, and evaluating their success in meeting their objectives.

In further pursuit of this goal, the committee is also charged:

- a. to consult with, and to advise the President of the University, the Senior Vice President for University Affairs, the Vice President for Student Affairs, and the President of the University Congress how they might best use their senior leadership positions to promote an educational climate that treats diversity constructively,
- b. to recommend to, and cooperate with, Senate and other committees whose actions define the formal Oakland educational experience,
- c. to promote dialogue, and otherwise to heighten awareness among the

larger groups of faculty, administrators, students, and other university personnel about how their individual actions contribute to the environment in which learning takes place, and

d. to maintain the committee's accountability, and that of the parties with whom the committee is charged to work, by reporting in open meeting to the University Senate on a biennial basis concerning the tasks that the committee has undertaken and the results that have been obtained.

**Membership:** Eleven members consisting of five faculty members (one of whom shall be chair) nominated by the Senate Steering Committee; two members nominated by the Senior Vice President for University Affairs; two members nominated by the Vice President for Student Affairs; and two members nominated by the President of the University Congress. It is expected that minorities, including blacks; women; and students will be represented. All members will be subject to confirmation by the University Senate. The term for non-student members will be three academic years, and the term for student members will be not more than two years.

With old business so productively concluded, senators turned their attention to the first item of new business. This proved to be a notion from the Graduate Council to reduce credit requirements for the master's degree in Nursing from 48 to 36 (Moved, Mr. Brown; seconded, Mr. Pettengill). Mr. Brown, whose interest in the measure derived from his position as vice chair of the Graduate Council, presented the motion and distributed a detailed rationale for the proposed changes. He explained that the School of Nursing wished to bring its graduate program into line with those of other universities in this region and immediate area. With other schools requiring fewer credits for the master's degree, Oakland has found itself at a disadvantage in continuing to call for 48. Citing Ms. Zenas's memo (6 December 1968) that he had just made available to his colleagues, he pointed out that the cut in credits would be accomplished by reallocating course material and credits. Ms. Zenas and other members of the Nursing faculty were available to answer questions.

Ms. Garcia introduced this process by inquiring what it meant to describe a course as "leaner." This adjective, according to Ms. Zenas, calls attention to a reduction in clinical hours rather than course content. The same material would be covered as before. Mr. Stamps, noting that he had taken great pride in the strong performance of Oakland's nursing students on state licensure examinations, now thought that he had found the reason: that they go through a more extensive academic program than their competitors. He learned, however, that those test scores have been earned by our undergraduates rather than by students in the program under discussion. He wondered how their curriculum could be cut so significantly without educational loss. Ms. Zenas placed this proposal in the context of changes in nursing education nationwide since the mid-1970s. Although the master's degree used to be the terminal point in her field, it has been superseded in this respect by the Ph.D. Schools, therefore, no longer feel the same pressure to jam content into the first of these advanced degrees but can allow some material to wait until students progress to doctoral study.

Mr. Stern objected that he could not imagine a profession in which hands-on experience would be more essential than nursing. He understood clinical work in that discipline as analogous to

laboratory work in the natural sciences. Knowing that his colleagues in Chemistry would cut almost anything else before reducing laboratory experience in their programs, he marveled that the Nursing faculty had decided to resolve their credit problem in that way. Ms. Zenas responded that master's students in her field are already fully licensed as practitioners. Faculty members are convinced that they provide more than adequate clinical experience to qualify their graduate students for practice. Mr. Stern then probed for information about the precise changes anticipated for specific courses. Ms. Wilson generalized that a one-credit reduction would cut back about three hours a week, assuring him that students would still be in a clinical setting eight hours weekly for a typical course although each course would distribute time differently. Professing herself surprised to hear a colleague from outside the Nursing school questioning such curricular changes, Ms. Braun said that she would not feel qualified to question the content of coursework in a discipline other than her own.

Mr. Grossman wondered whether the actual reduction of student time would correspond proportionately to the cut in credits and was assured that it would. When he then inquired whether students would take fewer semesters to complete their program or simply fewer credits each semester, he was told that they would take fewer credits each term while remaining in the program the same time. Most of the students, it turned out, would still be working full-time in their profession. Later, Mr. Grossman asked why work in statistics should be reduced from five credits to one and was assured by Ms. Zenas that statistics would be integrated into other courses in the program's research sequence.

Mr. Fish inquired why the program had required 48 credits to begin with. Had that number ever been the norm? Ms. Zenas replied that that figure had seemed best for Oakland's initial accreditation application even though the National League of Nursing sets no specific credit requirements for the master's degree but simply establishes content specifications. Ms. Garcia, supporting the motion, reported talking with her nurse daughter about changes in nursing education that backed up the statements of our Nursing faculty about the consequences of the transition from a terminal to a transitional master's degree. Seconding these comments, Ms. Theisen wondered what effect the curricular change would have on the number of faculty members. Ms. Lindell reported that faculty numbers would remain the same; she is negotiating with the provost on how this is to be accomplished. The drift of discussion alerted Mr. Eberwein to ask if he had missed something: are there plans for a doctoral program in Nursing on this campus? Not yet, according to Ms. Lindell, although her faculty members are contemplating such a step sometime in the future.

Mr. Barthel tried to get a clearer sense of the reason for these proposed changes. He wondered whether Oakland was experiencing a market problem and learned from Ms. Zenas that three universities in this area compete for the same students. With both other programs expected to be demanding substantially fewer credits than our program requires, we stand at a competitive disadvantage. Mr. Stamps eventually recurred to this matter of a rationale for change. He inquired whether the reduction in clinical hours would relieve pressures on our faculty only to learn that no cutbacks in their workload were likely. He then expressed his bemusement at a curricular adaptation designed to recruit more students at a time when the university is trying to hold the line on enrollments or even reduce them. Ms. Cass maintained that her colleagues were interested in competing for the best students rather than recruiting more of them, while keeping in line with national trends in nursing education. Changing the master's curriculum with reference to a doctoral program that Oakland doesn't plan to introduce made no sense to Mr. Stamps. Ms. Zenas assured him that no academic quality would be sacrificed with this change and emphasized her school's pride in the demonstrable excellence of its programs. Mr.

Stamps then asked when the current 48-credit program had been accredited and whether the review body had remarked on its requirements. It turned out that it had been reviewed last year, with accreditation announced this fall, and that the visiting team had made some inquiry about the unusually large number of required credits. Bringing the discussion to its terminus for the day, Mr. Stamps asked how many students were involved in the master's program and learned that there were 30 FTE. The second reading of this proposal now awaits the February Senate meeting.

More expeditiously concluded was the second item of new business: a motion from the Steering Committee nominating Jacqueline Scherer to replace Joan Rosen on the Academic Policy and Planning Committee for the winter 1989 semester (Moved, Ms. Muir; seconded, Mr. Eberwein). The motion was approved.

No private resolutions being advanced for the good of the order, Mr. Dahlgren proceeded to offer some nuggets of information. First, he asked Ms. Frankie for a report on the status of the library construction project. Ms. Frankie said that builders were already working on drywall so that the internal organization of the new wings is daily taking shape. The transfer of empire from the present library to the new wings is still scheduled to begin on February 15, so much preparation is now going on. Library personnel hope to provide guided tours once the mess is cleared up. The plan is for the library to close completely only for one week, that of the winter break, although some sections may have to be closed off at other times. She promised to keep the community informed.

Mr. Dahlgren then reported that the Board had taken action the previous night to recommend three firms to the state as acceptable architects for the new science building rather than sticking with only the original one. He professed himself hopeful about that change and looked forward to state action in February.

He then mentioned that the APPC had held an open hearing the day before to elicit community response to its draft planning assumptions. The committee is now revising those assumptions in line with the counsel it has received. He anticipated that Mr. Tracy would issue a written report late in January. On that note, he welcomed Mr. Olson's call for adjournment at 4:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jane D. Eberwein  
Secretary to the University Senate ~

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