

MEMORANDUM

September 2, 1981

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TO: Keith R. Kleckner, Chairman  
University Senate Steering Committee

FROM: W. Patrick Strauss, Chairman *WPS*  
University Admissions Committee

SUBJECT: Annual Report of the University Admissions Committee, 1980-81

I. Introduction

The past year's committee considered its role to be that of attempting to address problems related to admissions and the admissions process. To do this, we met as a committee, exclusive of additional subcommittee meetings five times during the fall and six times during the winter semester. Meetings were scheduled on a regular basis every two weeks. The subjects addressed and their disposition are discussed below, but one change enabled the group to work with more authority as representing the entire university community. This was the addition as a full voting member of an alumni representative--that charge being changed by the Senate in December 1980. Members of the Committee for 1980-81 were: L. Anderson, Financial Aid; H. Arnold, Math; R. Barr, Alumni; A. Cairns Federlein, Education; I. David, Library; S. Edwards, Student; J. Green, Student; L. Halstead, Performing Arts; C. Hurst, Student Services; I. Eliezer, College of Arts and Sciences; DeWayne Johnson, Student; K. Stanovich, Psychology; W. P. Strauss, History, ch., and E. Spencer and D. Whitmer, ex officio.

II. Activities of the Committee

The various activities of the committee are broken down into categories for convenience.

A. Standards for Admission to Oakland University

The policy of the admission of Freshman was approved by the Senate on May 30, 1970, while that of admitting transfer students dates from April 17, 1975. Two different constituents of the university community, students and faculty, expressed dissatisfaction with parts of the policy, so that the Committee felt that a review was in order. A sub-committee composed of Mr. Hurst, Mr. Green and Ms. Cairns-Federlein was formed. While they did meet, little substantive was achieved, and this year hopefully more will be accomplished. It should be noted that the subject came up several times during meetings of the entire Committee and that members gave their opinions as well as hearing testimony by the Dean of the School of Nursing and receiving a letter on the subject from the Associate Dean of the College of Engineering. The fruition of new or changed policies in the form of suggested legislation is not expected until the academic year 1982-83.

#### B. Oakland University's Image and Related Problems

In the Fall of 1980 the University Senate Steering Committee asked the Admission Committee to investigate as to whether there was a problem concerning Oakland's name. The Admissions Committee discussed the subject on several occasions and set up a sub-committee composed of Messrs. Barr and Stanovich. Their report, dated December 1, 1980, was divided into two parts. The first consisted of suggestions for improving institutional visibility as regards the various Meadow Brooks and was passed by the Steering Committee to the Senate for their information, and subsequently to the President. The result has already become apparent with the beginning of a much better integration of these units with the University. A copy of these suggestions appear as Appendix A.

The second part of the report was on the name change. The Committee discussed this at least four different times in some detail. In addition other members of the university including Messrs. Beardslee and Connellan testified. The Committee was sharply divided on the issue and finally by a slim majority of 9 yeas to 6 nays, the Committee voted in favor of a Senate resolution calling for a presidential commission to investigate a name change, was reported to the Senate on April 9, 1981. The Senate had a full discussion on the motion plus an amendment and subsequently voted by a substantial margin not to approve the resolution.

#### C. Closer Relationship of the University Community to Area High Schools

One of the major thrusts of the Committee during the past year was to involve more members of the University Community with the area high schools. The Committee felt that any Oakland University endeavor--whether a program, lecture or whatever, could have admissions potential, and we have worked on this premise. Eventually, we evolved a three-tiered plan regarding faculty and students participation with local high schools.

The first tier consisted of "Dog and Pony Shows" which have broad appeal and are for large groups of high school students. The Meadow Brook Estate and the Student Enterprise Theatre are two examples of this, but there is a cost factor involved which decreases their value for our purposes. In addition, a broad-based ad hoc committee of Messrs. Eliezer, Dahlmann, Kleckner and Strauss worked with and encouraged Professor Paul Doherty in building a program around the sources of energy, their problems and uses. The program was brought to fruition when Professor Doherty presented it to two different enthusiastic audiences at Renaissance High School, Detroit in early April. A fourth program that we hope to utilize this coming year is one offered by Professor Roy Kotynek on the history of rock and roll music in the 1950's. This, too, is a multi-media presentation that promises to have wide appeal.

To capitalize on this sort of general activity, we are developing a letter to go in teachers mailboxes after the presentation calling their attention to the fact that Oakland University offers diverse programs and suggesting that they might perhaps like additional information. Mr. Rose has formulated a draft of this letter.

The second of the three tiers is the individual faculty member lecturing at a high school either on a stated subject, or acting as a resource person, or both. Several departments do this but the difficulty has been in making it an admissions tool because often no one except the department knows when the professor

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is scheduled or what the subject of the lecture will be. Both Mr. Spencer and Mr. Whitmer, who sat in with the committee irregularly, thought that if such a list were available to them to show various principals and superintendents, that it would be most valuable. An attempt was made to gather this information from the departments, but the result was disappointing. We have taken parts of the reports we do have, plus some we know about and have composed a suggested type of list which will be circulated this fall to department chairpersons. Then, perhaps, the next time the information will be returned in a more useable form. A copy of this suggested report appears as Appendix B.

The third aspect of our program is to attempt to build a special relationship with certain of the high schools. The reasons would include proximity to the University, strong past relations in terms of graduates who attend OU and a number of other reasons. To date, we have worked with Renaissance High School in Detroit and hope to expand this to Utica Eisenhower and, perhaps, Rochester Adams.

While this section has concentrated mainly on faculty involvement, it would not be complete if the work of students and alumni were not mentioned. As of now there are programs operated by both, but the Admissions Committee has not as yet worked with these groups as it has with the faculty. However, the Committee hopes this will change this year.

#### D. Special Programs and Other Activities

1) The Admissions Committee is called upon to rule on admission of students who do not have the usual criteria for admissions, but who are considered special because of a musical, acting, dance or other talent. This past year the Committee set up a Sub-Committee to make recommendations, but it has yet to be called upon, probably because the year before last the Committee spelled out not so much guidelines as parameters for guidance in these cases.

2) Working closely with Mr. Rose, the Committee has set up Admission target areas where stress will be placed in focusing programs as detailed above in Section C. This list is shown as Appendix C.

3) The Committee early perceived the problem of the administration of the various developing programs in a way so that we could take full advantage of them. Committees by their nature are not able to consistently handle administrative functions, so those that acquire them must find a place to put them. We found that there is no central scheduling authority for the various music groups or the mime, although Ms. Chipman in Music sent us copies of all programs scheduled by their groups. Furthermore, there was no place where we could be assured that follow up letters after performances would be sent. Also, there is no budget to allow for even minimal charges such as reimbursement for professors for mileage. Early in the year, a memo was addressed to then Provost, Fred Obear, included as Appendix D. As of this date, the Committee does not know whether the recent re-organization has taken steps to solve this major problem.

4) A problem of a far different nature was brought up early by Mr. Wilson, and concerned the retention of students. The Committee spent parts of several sessions discussing the problem and hearing from both Mr. Wilson and Mr. Appleton. We have become convinced that this is a problem that must be shared by several different committees, ours being one of them. We will continue to work on the problem but no early legislation on the subject is contemplated.

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5) Another worthwhile activity which has consumed much time of the chairman has been working with Professor Louis Morton on a program to bring gifted minority students to Oakland, called the Apprentice Scholar Program. So far seven faculty have been recruited to work in the program. As of now it is too early to evaluate success of the program.

The chairman also worked with Mr. Manuel Pierson in restructuring ties with Renaissance High School. This resulted in a visit in early April by a group composed of Messrs. Unaker, Henry, Doherty, Strauss and Pierson to Renaissance and a planning session which we trust will bear fruit this coming year. Mr. Pierson and the Committee chairman are also working on a special plan for certain gifted students from Renaissance High School to come to Oakland several times during the school year and for a month in the summer, and receive four elective credits from Oakland. This is in the planning state and it is hoped it too will be able to begin this fall.

6) A final item that has been started concerns a basic interest flyer which could be distributed on a mass basis to high school students. We have one, but members of the Committee, especially student members, were not satisfied with it. Mr. Green of the Committee has undertaken the task of the preliminary design of a new flyer, and we hope to have that ready this fall.

The meetings of the Committee were lively and characterized by a frank and open exchange of ideas and opinions. It has been a pleasure to work with such a dedicated group.

WPS/pt

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