

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES ASSEMBLY

Minutes

Meeting of 24 September 2002

Rooms 128-30 Oakland Center

Attendance

Members Present: Wallis Andersen, Robert Anderson, Peter Bertocci, Dikka Berven, Ronald Butzlaff, Arthur Bull, Jane Eberwein, David Garfinkle, Jerrold Grossman, Elysa Koppelman, Paul Kubicek, Abdi Kusow, Emmett Lombard, Barbara Mabee, Tamara Machmut-Jhashi, Mark Metzler, Karen Miller, Michael Mitchell, Sean Moran, Ingrid Rieger, Darrell Schmidt, Jack Tsui, Susan Wood, Jill Zeilstra-Ryalls, Xiangqun Zeng

Ex Officio Present: David Downing, Mary Papazian

Members Not Present: Mary Eberly, Sam Rosenthal, Irwin Schochetman

Ex Officio Not Present: William Macauley

Dean Downing convened the meeting at 3:32.

As is traditional at the first meeting of the academic year, members introduced themselves.

Dean Downing thanked Susan Wood for her years of service recording minutes, Jerrold Grossman for continuing to serve as parliamentarian, and Wallis Andersen for agreeing to record minutes.

1. Minutes from October 23, 2001, November 13, 2001, and February 19, 2002
Moved to approve the minutes from October 23, 2001, November 13, 2001, and February 19, 2002 (David Garfinkle). Supported. Approved unanimously as corrected.

2. Election of new members of the Executive Committee

Three new members were elected to the Executive committee as follows:

David Garfinkle Mathematics/Science

Karen Miller Humanities position

Arthur Bull At Large

Jerrold Grossman urged working closely with Student Congress to identify a student representative.

3. Approval of nominations for Committee on Instruction and the Graduate Studies Committee

a. ***Moved, that the following faculty members be appointed to two-year (2002-2004) terms on the Committee on Instruction***

Karen A.J. Miller Humanities

Jude V. Nixon Language/Literature

Joel W. Russell Mathematics/Science

And that Mary Eberly be appointed chairperson for 2002-2003 (Barbara Mabee, for the Executive Committee). Supported.

After confirming the individuals were willing to serve, the vote was called and the motion was approved unanimously.

b. ***Moved, that the following faculty members be appointed to two-year (2002-2004) terms on the Graduate Studies Committee***

Robert F. Anderson ***Language/Literature***

Amanda Bryant-Friedrich ***At Large***

Christopher R. Clason ***At Large***

And that Dale Nesbary be appointed chairperson for 2002-2003 (Barbara Mabee, for the Executive Committee). Supported.

After receiving reassurance that only two members are from the Languages and Literature group (Robert Anderson and Christopher Clason), the vote was called and the motion approved unanimously.

Dean Downing thanked the new members of the Committee on Instruction and the Graduate Studies Committee for their willingness to serve

4. Update on budget and position allocations

Dean Downing presented highlights of President Russi's budget presentation to the Senate at its first meeting on September 19. President Russi's full presentation is available on the Senate's Web site (Senate minutes, "presentation" and "folder" links) or in hard copy from the College. Due to projected State revenue shortfalls, Michigan's new governor will very likely issue an executive order that could reduce the amounts paid to colleges. The most likely timing for any recision is the first quarter of 2003.

At its August meeting the Board of Trustees encumbered \$1.2 million, which had been generated primarily by enrollments over the projected numbers in last FY, as a contingency fund in case of State cutbacks. Oakland is half-way towards covering a mid-year recision of 5%. Units in the university have been asked to prepare reduction plans. The last pages of President Russi's presentation identify "values to guide" (Senate minutes, "values" link) preparation of unit reduction plans.

Dean Downing informed the Assembly that position allocations were sent to the departments early last week; there are 8 searches in 8 departments, some continuing from last year. The dean does not have the information about how many searches are authorized in the university. Information from Interim Provost Moudgil's office indicates Oakland now has 447 full-time faculty; faculty in CAS constitute 52% of the total, a slight increase from 4 years ago when College faculty represented 49%. In response to a question from Karen Miller, Dean Downing estimated the proportion of Special Instructors at 8% in the College.

5. Update on travel policies

Dean Downing distributed a revision of the College's Travel Regulations, effective July 1, 2002. Updates bring the policy into alignment with university policies, including per diem amounts and documentation requirements. The Executive Committee will be reviewing the caps on first-trip reimbursements and will bring any recommended changes to the Assembly later this year. Dean Downing will also investigate the cash advance policy and possible wording changes due to the shift from actual airplane tickets to e-tickets.

6. Update on capital campaign.

Julie Lichtenberg will report at the next Assembly meeting.

7. Status of general education reforms

Dean Downing noted that departments should have had or will have discussions of the current proposals (presented as four different “approaches”); responses have been requested by September 30. Conversations have been held at the chairs’ level.

Comments from constituent groups are going to Task Force 2 by the end of the month and Task Force 2 hopes to make a recommendation to the Senate by January.

The Assembly then discussed Approach 4 (and the overall proposals and process).

Concerns which were raised by members of the Assembly include:

- that Module 4 is not clear on whether this is a foreign language requirement or not
- why Approach 4 only is being discussed now
- that the proposal will be very complex for advising
- that assessing outcomes which must be demonstrated through essay writing will be very difficult (or impossible) in general education classes with large enrollments
- whether the “Values Area Learning Outcomes” will require faculty to change how they teach
- that faculty (let alone students) have will difficulties understanding the program, due in large part to wording and vagueness
- that Module 9 of the Knowledge Area Learning Outcomes has considerable vagueness and overlap with many other modules
- that the makeup of the Task Force is “flawed”
- that the Modules have missing elements: philosophy and psychology do not appear to fit anywhere in the Knowledge Area learning Outcomes modules
- that Module 8 fails to mention “scientific method” and, further, inappropriately emphasizes, in Outcome 4, computer tables and graphs.
- that it’s unclear what students are expected to know when they enter the university; for example, in Module 8, Outcomes 3 and 4, shouldn’t students already be able to do this at some level, and what progress would be expected at the university level?
- that all of the Approaches rest on learning outcomes which were highly disputed at Senate and not approved there. Senate discussion will continue, but Task Force 2 was told in the Spring by the Senate to continue its work
- that at every stage, faculty are constantly reminded of the process; at no point is there approval, but the work keeps moving on. This process-driven system appears unlikely to result in something we can live with.
- that Oakland has a “modes of knowledge” system, not a “skills” system, which is more like community college models.
- that Module 2 (p. 5) does not clarify what OU expects. The language is vague, and it’s unclear how courses can implement/demonstrate the outcomes.
- that the capstone element would increase staff needs greatly in departments with large numbers of majors

Following this discussion, the following resolution was offered:

The Assembly of the College of Arts and Sciences has serious reservations about the current general education proposals and little faith in the current process. It

asks that that the Oakland University Senate appoint a new committee to reevaluate general education (Sean Moran). Supported.

The motion was approved unanimously.

Dean Downing indicated that he will take the resolution to the Interim Provost, the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education, the chair of Task Force 2, and the Senate Steering Committee tomorrow.

8. Good and Welfare

The Studio Art major has been approved by UCUI. It next goes to the Senate Steering Committee, which will send it to Senate Budget Review and Senate Planning Review Committees.

Dean Downing adjourned the meeting at 4:48.