

Oakland University Senate
April 14, 2011
Minutes

Members present: *Andersen, Awbrey, Bednarski, Berven, D., Berven, K., Doman, Eis, Folberg, Graetz, Graves, Grimm, Grossman, Guessous, Hawthorne-Burdine, Hay, Hightower, Inski, Jackson, Kim, Kruk, Latcha, Leibert, LeMarbe, Lepkowski, Mabee, Marks, Meehan, Miller, Mitton, Penprase, Piskulich, Reger, Russell, Schott-Baer, Schartman, Shablin, Southward, Sudol, Switzer, Tardella, Tracy, Walters, Wells, Williams*

Members absent: *Chamra, Free, Frick, Gallien, Giblin, Licker, Moran, Pedroni, Polis, Schweitzer, Spaguolo, Tanniru*

Summary of Actions:

Informational Items

e-Learning and instructional support Moodle policy

Lean software purchasing process

Senate committee vacancies

Provost's updates

New Business

Motion to recommend approval of a grading system change

Motion to recommend approval of the Bachelor of Science in Biomedical Sciences

Provost Moudgil called the meeting to order at 3:15 P.M.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

1. e-Learning and Instructional Support Moodle Policy -- Ms. Cheal

Ms. Cheal addressed the issue of course ownership in Moodle. She said there had been some improper use of Moodle, and so changes have been made to the Moodle policy. Up until now, the university has been saving everything on Moodle, but now the back-up file will remain for three years only. The rationale for this is that it will limit liability for users.

2. Lean Software Purchasing Process -- Ms. Rowe

Ms. Rowe and Ms. Harris reported on the results of a lengthy Academic Computing Committee project in which they looked into the general dissatisfaction with the software procurement process in place at the university. The result of their investigation is a change to make the process leaner by means of a form that is intended to get all the needed information up front. The process will be friendlier, there will be a faster procurement process (within a day or two), and the form will provide better documentation for future reference. Provost Moudgil thanked all those who had worked on this endeavor, and in particular Mr. Doman for his leadership.

3. Senate Committee Vacancies -- Ms. Berven

Ms. Berven reported that the call to volunteer for Senate committees has gone out, and Senate members were encouraged to consider volunteering their service. She pointed out that the list of vacancies is posted on the Senate website, and said that there are vacancies across the board. A dedicated email account for the Senate (senate@oakland.edu) has been established, and faculty members can use this address to volunteer. Senate members were asked to encourage faculty members in their departments to consider volunteering for a committee.

4. Provost's Updates

Provost Moudgil provided an update on the searches for Dean of Kresge Library, Vice Provost for Research, and Director of the Honors College. He said there will be some satellite and some on-campus interviews. Due to the fact that there are fewer faculty members on campus after mid-April, the push was on to compact the visits. He encouraged Senate members to meet the candidates when they are visiting the campus.

A. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES of February 17, 2011

The [minutes](#) of the Senate meeting of February 17, 2011, were approved (motion by Eis, second by Guessous). Mr. Russell said that regarding the non-smoking policy informational item, volunteers are needed for the signage committee.

B. NEW BUSINESS

1. Motion from the Steering Committee to recommend approval of a Grading System Change recommended by Graduate Council and the University Committee on Undergraduate Instruction.

MOVED that the Senate approve the proposed changes to Undergraduate and Graduate Incomplete Policies as recommended by the Graduate Council and the University Committee on Undergraduate Instruction (Mr. Doman, Mr. Grimm)

Mr. Shablin informed the Senate that the policy for incomplete grades had not been reviewed for a long time. The new policy would include a one year from deadline date.

Mr. Grossman pointed out that with the existing policy, a student requesting an incomplete has to do so before the final exam, and so he suggested that the policy should be made more flexible to account for an emergency, such as if a student were to have a car accident on the way to the final exam and thus be unable to take the exam. Provost Moudgil agreed that there should be this kind of flexibility. Mr. Shablin said that they would attend to this matter.

2. Motion from the Steering Committee to recommend approval of the [Bachelor of Science in Biomedical Sciences](#)

MOVED that the Senate recommend to the President and the Board of Trustees Approval of the Bachelor of Science in Biomedical Sciences (Mr. Grimm)

Provost Moudgil introduced Mr. Dvir, who introduced Mr. Berven and Ms. Hitt who were also present to answer questions about the proposal for the B.S. in Biomedical Sciences (BMS). Mr. Dvir said that the BMS committee had been at work on the proposal for a long time. For the last several years, they have been watching shifting trends in biomedical education, and they have been listening to their students. He said that the Biology department wants to keep the edge for their students. Mr. Dvir pointed out that the proposal had been approved by the CAS as well as the CAS UCUI, but it had hit some rough waters at the Senate committee level. In retrospect, he felt that there were some things that their committee could have done differently, but this does not change the fact that the BMS will be a program to help OU students achieve their long-term goals.

Mr. Dvir provided an [overview](#) of the program, saying that it is going to be a very rigorous major with academic requirements that are not common in existing programs. The new major is intended to attract the most capable students, and it is expected to attract a sizable group. He gave several reasons for creating the BMS. There has been unprecedented growth in the Biology department. They have gone from delivering 15,365 credits in 2005, to 2010 when the Biology department delivered 31,397 credits, and the Biology department is the largest unit on campus as far as number of credits delivered. Similarly, in 2005, there were 367 majors, whereas in 2010, the number of majors had grown to 798—and so it is the largest department on campus by the criterion of number of majors as well. However, there has not been much growth in terms of the number of faculty members in the Biology department. Mr. Dvir said that Laura Schartman had provided him with a chart to forecast the number of Biology majors that the department would have by 2015, a number that could be from 1100 to as high as 1406 majors in four years time. Mr. Dvir pointed out that this is a big responsibility for the Biology department, but that the increasing enrollments are a good thing for the university. He said that the Biology department does not want to be static or satisfied with the status quo, but rather, they want to continue to evolve and so they pay close attention to what is happening at the national level. Across the nation, enrollments in biological sciences are increasing. Training in biological sciences is considered to be an important foundation for both academic and vocational tracks. Furthermore, the demand for bio-scientists is increasing rapidly, and there is a nationwide demand for medical training and pre-medical education as well. Mr. Dvir said that they had done a departmental student questionnaire: 78% of respondents said they are pre-med majors, and 96% said that they plan to continue education in graduate or professional education. Because the Biology department strives to offer the best pre-med education for OU students, they feel they have to offer a new major as an option for students.

Mr. Dvir reported that the American Association of Medical Colleges has declared that pre-med students in the USA need to have a more rigorous science foundation than they presently have. The new MCAT exam will be much more rigorous in Biology. Pre-med students are expected to have experience doing research. The Biology department can accommodate this demand because there are multi-layers of research going on in the department where the M.A., M.S. and Ph.D. students' research projects provide a backbone for undergraduate student research. Also, the program will have an emphasis on math and physics. Mr. Dvir said that to be competitive, his department realizes that they are not the only game in town, and so they keep track of what other universities are doing. The student base in Biology is similar at OU to the size at Wayne. He believes it is possible for the OU Biology department to have the best pre-

med program in Michigan. Within OU, Mr. Dvir predicted that migration from other departments on campus to this one would be insignificant because students enroll in specific programs due to their own specific interests and so the BMS will not have a negative impact on other departments. Mr. Dvir pointed out that the budget in the proposal that is before the Senate is smaller than the one in the initial proposal that went to the committees, but he stressed that his department would not offer the program unless they believed it would bring in substantial revenue to the university.

Ms. Hitt then gave a detailed description of the courses that would be required for students in the BMS. The list included a number of new courses, such as Evolutionary Medicine, courses in active learning, a new course in Pharmacology, as examples.

Mr. Grossman asked if there would be new faculty lines in Biology for the BMS. Mr. Dvir replied that there would be, but that the Biology department needs these new faculty members with or without the new major. Mr. Grossman said that there are also courses required in physics and math and other areas, and so he asked if there would also be faculty lines in these departments to accommodate the new BMS. Mr. Dvir replied that if these departments have more pressure due to this program, then they can go to their Dean and request new faculty lines, but that would be up to them.

Ms. Williams expressed her objection that the SHS was not consulted about the BMS major. She believes that such a major can be achieved through courses that already exist on campus, that the program duplicates what already exists, and that this major is not necessary in this time of fiscal conservatism. Mr. Dvir said that he had tried to reach out to the SHS but could not get through to them. Furthermore, he said that Biology has a different student base than the SHS, and the two groups do not tend to mix.

Mr. Russell said that the changes to the budget of the present proposal are a big improvement. The Budget Review committee did not express great support for the program with the first budget that was proposed, but the new budget strengthens the proposal. Mr. Dvir said that the Senate review committees have an advisory role, and his departmental committee was going to incorporate their advice over the summer. However, they would not dilute the academic content of the program.

Mr. Meehan stated that Senate advisory committees are always important to the process of creating new proposals. He said that Mr. Bull, Mr. Dvir and himself had gotten together to talk about the proposal, but there was a lack of information from the committees. Two of the three reports were not dated, for example, and reports were not posted in a timely manner. He was disappointed that in some of the committees, there is no documentation for the problems that were raised concerning the BMS. For example, evidence that the proposal was duplicating other courses on campus was not provided although this objection had been made. Mr. Meehan said it would be a good idea for the Biology department to sit down with SHS to talk about this new major proposal, but that documentation needs to be provided by SHS to substantiate their objections.

Ms. Jackson said that the Senate Planning Committee's biggest concern was whether or not the BMS is a necessary program. She pointed out that students can major in any number of subjects before going to medical school, but she questioned whether it is necessary for OU to have a 'Cadillac' program such as this one. Mr. Dvir replied that OU does need to have this program in order to meet the needs of today's students.

Ms. Southward asked about the questionnaire/survey given to Biology students, saying that if 78% of the students plan to pursue pre-med, does that mean there would be a 78% decline in Biology majors. She asked if the present proposal will be the only way to prepare pre-med majors for medical school or if there will be other options. From a student perspective, she wondered why they could not create a concentration with the current Biology major instead. Mr. Dvir replied that the Biology department will not be satisfied with a major that is okay today, but will not be okay five years from now. With this program, they are creating eight new courses (32 credits) to address what are new needs as expressed by the experts within the medical profession.

Ms. Wren (Health Sciences) said it is not true that SHS has been hard to reach. She said SHS has 1200 majors, they deliver a premier pre-medical major and SHS does more with less. In fact, they offer both a pre-med and pre-veterinary major. Mr. Dvir observed that only 2.7% of all applicants to medical school come from Health Sciences departments, and only 1.7% of those ultimately accepted are from Health Sciences departments, according to the statistics.

Mr. Berven stated that in the future, the MCAT is going to be significantly different from what it is today, and will follow the recommendations of the Howard Hughes Study group for curricular changes. By the year 2015, the emphasis is going to be competency-based, and there will be a full section devoted to biology--unlike the present MCAT in which biology is together with organic chemistry and other subjects. Mr. Mitton asked whether the School of Medicine has been a resource, and whether they had specified what they are looking for in their applicants. Mr. Dvir said that the Biology department had consulted with them and followed their advice about rigor and breadth in student preparation. Mr. Grossman suggested that a representative of the School of Medicine should come to the Senate next year for their input. Mr. Russell said that the main concern of his committee was whether the BMS is needed. The Budget Review committee had prepared a sheet with 31 questions for the Biology committee, most of which questions dealt with whether there was a need for a BMS, and Mr. Russell indicated that he did not find the responses helpful.

C. GOOD AND WELFARE

- Ms. Graetz reported on the recent event centered on autism that took place the week before. There were 460 families affected by autism who attended. She said the event went extremely well, and she expressed her thanks to the Rec Center for their support, and also to the Grizzly mascot who made an appearance. May 12 and 13 will be the 3rd annual Autism Symposium. This year's focus is on adolescents and adults. Anyone interested in finding out more should go to the OU Cares website.
- Mr. Latcha pointed out that this was Frances Jackson's last Senate meeting before her retirement from the university, and he expressed his great appreciation to her for her

many years of service. There was a round of applause for his words and in tribute to Ms. Jackson.

- Provost Moudgil thanked the Senate Steering Committee for their work throughout the year, and expressed his special thanks to George Preisinger for his technical support at the Senate meetings.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:50 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,
Dikka Berven