



OAKLAND UNIVERSITY
S E N A T E

Oakland University Senate

First Meeting
Thursday, October 3, 1974
3:15 p.m.
128-130 Oakland Center

AGENDA

Submitted by Frederick W. Obear, for the Steering Committee.

A. Old Business.

None.

B. New Business.

1. Steering Committee Election (Mr. Light).

Mr. Graber has resigned from the Steering Committee. He held a designated School of Education seat on the Committee and must be replaced by a Senate member whose primary appointment is in the School of Education.

2. Motion from the Steering Committee (Mr. Obear).

THAT THE FOLLOWING PERSONS BE NAMED TO THE ARTISTIC
EXPRESSION BOARD OF REVIEW:

Alex Gray, Chairman
Joseph DeMent
David Daniels

Procedural motion, eligible for final vote.

Comment: The 1974-75 Student Handbook states on page 37:

THIS POLICY WAS RECOMMENDED BY THE COMMISSION ON STUDENT
LIFE AND APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY.

IF THE STUDENTS RESPONSIBLE FOR AN ARTISTIC ENDEAVOR SEEK
ADVICE OF THE UNIVERSITY, OR IF, AT THE TIME OF PRODUCTION OR
DISPLAY, DISAPPROVAL IS VOICED TO THE PRESIDENT, HE SHALL CHARGE

THE UNIVERSITY SENATE WITH THE RESPONSIBILITY OF APPOINTING A BOARD OF REVIEW TO GIVE A PROFESSIONAL OPINION REGARDING THE PARTICULAR WORK. IF THE BOARD JUDGES THE WORK TO BE OBSCENE, OR OFFENSIVE BY REASON OF LIBEL OR SLANDER, THE UNIVERSITY RESERVES THE RIGHT TO WITHDRAW FACILITIES AND SPONSORSHIP. IF THE WORK IS APPROVED BY THE BOARD, THE UNIVERSITY THEREBY COMMITS ITSELF TO PROVIDE FACILITIES.

The motion above would establish the Board to which this provision refers.

3. Motion from the Steering Committee (Mr. Obear)

THAT THE MEMBERSHIP SPECIFICATIONS OF THE TEACHING AND LEARNING COMMITTEE BE CHANGED TO READ:

MEMBERSHIP: SIX FACULTY; FOUR STUDENTS; TWO ADMINISTRATIVE PROFESSIONALS; TWO MEMBERS-AT-LARGE; AND THE DIRECTOR OF RESEARCH AND INSTRUCTIONAL SERVICES, WHO IS *EX OFFICIO* AND NON-VOTING.

Procedural motion, eligible for final vote. Comment: This action would expand the faculty membership by two and the at-large membership by one. Mr. Schillace, chairman of the Teaching and Learning Committee, has recommended this change "to achieve a greater University representativeness and to provide appropriate manpower for some large anticipated projects."

4. Motion from the Academic Policy Committee (Mr. Feeman)

THAT OAKLAND UNIVERSITY'S GRADING SYSTEM BE CHANGED IN THE FOLLOWING WAYS, ALL CHANGES TO BE EFFECTIVE IN THE WINTER TERM, 1975.

1. THAT A "S" OR "N" BE ASSIGNED BY THE INSTRUCTOR IN A COURSE FROM WHICH A STUDENT WITHDRAWS OFFICIALLY FROM THE END OF THE REFUND PERIOD IN THE TERM TO ONE WEEK BEFORE THE FINAL EXAMINATION PERIOD IN THAT TERM. "WS" IS TO BE ASSIGNED IF THE PERFORMANCE OF THE STUDENT AT THE TIME OF WITHDRAWAL IS SATISFACTORY IN TERMS OF GRADUATION STANDARDS, THAT IS, IF IT MERITS A GRADE OF 2.0 OR BETTER. "WN" IS TO BE ASSIGNED IF THE PERFORMANCE OF THE STUDENT IS UNSATISFACTORY, THAT IS, IF IT MERITS A GRADE OF LESS THAN 2.0.

THE OFFICIAL WITHDRAWAL AFTER THE REFUND PERIOD FROM A COURSE OR COURSES, AS OPPOSED TO COMPLETE WITHDRAWAL FROM THE UNIVERSITY, AND THE SUBSEQUENT ASSIGNMENT OF "S" OR "WN" ARE TO BE ACCOMPLISHED IN THE FOLLOWING WAY

a. THE STUDENT OBTAINS AN APPROPRIATE FORM, TO BE DESIGNED BY THE ACADEMIC POLICY COMMITTEE, IN THE

OFFICE OF THE DEPARTMENT WHICH OFFERS THE COURSE FROM WHICH THE WITHDRAWAL IS TO BE MADE.

b. THE STUDENT TAKES THE FORM TO THE INSTRUCTOR AND HAS IT COMPLETED. ONE COPY IS KEPT BY THE STUDENT AND ONE BY THE INSTRUCTOR.

c. THE INSTRUCTOR RECORDS THE GRADE ON THE FINAL GRADE REPORT.

2. THAT THE DEFINITION OF THE "N" GRADE BE CHANGED TO: THE "N" IS ASSIGNED BY THE INSTRUCTOR IN ANY COURSE FROM WHICH A STUDENT DOES NOT OFFICIALLY WITHDRAW PRIOR TO ONE WEEK BEFORE THE FINAL EXAM PERIOD IN THE TERM IN WHICH HE/SHE HAS REGISTERED FOR THE COURSE AND FOR WHICH THE STUDENT DOES NOT RECEIVE CREDIT. IT IS UNDERSTOOD TO MEAN THAT THE STUDENT HAS COMPLETED THE COURSE UNSUCCESSFULLY.

3. THAT ALL GRADES, NUMERIC AND NON-NUMERIC ALIKE, BE RECORDED ON A STUDENT'S TRANSCRIPT SO THAT THE TOTAL ACADEMIC RECORD OF THE STUDENT IS VISIBLE TO THE READER.

4. THAT NONE OF THE NON-NUMERIC GRADES (S, N, W, WS, WN, I, P) BE USED IN THE COMPUTATION OF THE GRADE POINT AVERAGE.

First reading.

Comments: Since its introduction in 1970, there have been many problems with the "N" grade. Some of them are:

1. Since N grades do not appear on transcripts, the grade records of students are distorted. For students with good records this represents a devaluation of the record. Those who look at a transcript do not know whether to take it at face value or not. Are there N's lurking in the background? For students who take fewer credits than the normal full load of 16 to 18, the situation is the same. Did they simply not register for a full load, or did they get N's? What was the actual situation? On the other hand, students with poor records benefit from the N's not showing on the record.

2. Attitudes about the N vary greatly. Some professors won't use it. Others negotiate with students about it or are pressured by students to negotiate.

3. Administrative and governance difficulties with the N have become severe, particularly with regard to implementation of dismissal and probationary policies. The Committee on Academic Standing and Honors has expressed a desire that legislation be passed to permit it to distinguish the various meanings which are inherent in the present N grade.

4. Problems with the legislature are on the horizon. There is a movement toward appropriating funds on a "completed credit" basis. The reduction in FYES resulting from this elimination of N grade credits could be equivalent to a loss of more than \$1,000,000 at current funding

levels.

5. The presence of the N grade has caused a change in student behavior toward the rule for repeating a course. Prior to 1970, students repeated courses in which they had earned grades in the range below 2.0. Since 1970, they have chosen to drop out if in trouble, receive an N, then repeat the course. The result is that none of this action appeared on the transcript, thus benefiting the students while distorting the record.

The purpose of the proposed legislation is to resolve these problems and to create a better system of grading. We on the APC believe that there is a great need at Oakland for stability in the grading system. So many changes have been made in a short period of time that few people, faculty and students alike, know precisely the whole system and what it means. Therefore, we have sought a solution which is at once simple, palatable, and acceptable, yet one which will have maximum impact.

The introduction of the W, WS, and WN, as in earlier legislation and in item I of this motion, will separate out the various meanings of the present N grade without penalizing the students. It does require them to take official action, however. The legislation reinstates the role of the instructor in the choice between 'S' or "WN". The reason for terminating the official withdrawal period one week before the final exam period is that, technically, faculty members are not allowed to give examinations during that week, thus the total prefinal examination record is available to the instructor. In addition, the introduction of the W, 'WS, and WN, permits a single meaning to be attached to an N grade, as in item 4 of the legislation. It means that the student has completed the course unsuccessfully. Thus, N grade credits are "completed" credits

The effect of item 3 of the motion will be to provide an honest recording of grades on the transcript with flexibility of interpretation by the reader. Since the total record would be shown, readers of a transcript could interpret it as they would. The important thing is that the entire record would be visible. Thus distortions would no longer be possible. For example, one student might have a G.P.A. of 3.00 in 31 courses with 10 N's, while another might have a G.P.A. of 3.00 in 31 courses with 0 N's. If the interpreter would wish to downgrade the G.P.A. of the first student for the 40 credits of N's, he/she could do it easily. If, on the other hand, he/she would not care about doing that and would wish to credit the student for persistence or some other positive characteristic, he/she could do that too. Let the interpreters interpret as they will. Internally the student would still benefit from not having the nonnumeric grades count toward the G.P.A.

Finally , the APC encourages the Committee on Academic Standing and Honors to consider two things:

1. A limitation on the number of S, WS, N, and WN grades a student may have on his/her record in order to compete for University honors. This would force students who have the achievement of honors as a goal to consider their actions carefully before selecting S/N courses or before withdrawing from a course during the term. There is no rustication for placing limits on the number of "S" grades a student may accumulate toward graduation, as is done in many schools. Data on student behavior shows that such action is not warranted. In fact, such action would have an adverse effect on experimentation and on special programs with the University, such as New Charter College.

2. Determination of probationary and dismissal policies with regard to W, N, and WN grades, as soon as possible after this legislation has been approved and not later than the Fall of 1975. These recommendations seem to provide a balanced solution to our present grading problems. The new system would provide greater clarity white retaining flexibility of interpretation. To summarize, should this legislation be approved, the grading system would be as follows:

(a) The first two weeks of a term (one week in Spring or Sumner Sessions) are a free period for dropping and adding courses, a no-grade period.

(b) "W" is assigned by the Registrar if a student withdraws officially from a course between the end of the no-grade period and the end of the refund period.

(c) The instructor assigns a "WS" or "WN" in a course from which a student withdraws officially between the end of the refund period and one week before the beginning of the final examination period.

(d) The Registrar assigns a "W" in all courses if a student withdraws officially from the University at any time prior to the end of the term.

(e) The "I" grade is assigned by the instructor if the student becomes ill or other circumstances prevent completion of the course near the end of the term. The course must be completed within the first four weeks of the next term in which a student registers. Extensions are permitted on request of the instructor to the Dean. (For a complete statement, see the current catalog.)

(f) A "P" grade is assigned if a course is continued in progress. (For a complete statement, see the current catalog.)

(g) If none of the above applies, the course is considered to be completed, and the instructor assigns an S, M, or a numerical grade from 1.0 to 4.0 inclusive, where S means 2.0 or greater. As at present, S/N graded courses must have prior approval by the appropriate Committee on Instruction. For external purposes the numerical grades may be converted to letters as follows:

3.6 - 4.0 A
 3.0 - 3.5 B
 2.0 - 2.9 C
 1.0 - 1.9 D

All grades, numeric and non-numeric alike, are to appear on a students' transcript. However, only numerical grades are to be used in the determination of the student's grade point average.

5. Motions from the Academic Standing and Honors Committee (Ms. Bingham)

a. THAT MOTIONS b, c, d, AND e BE APPROVED FOR FINAL VOTE AT THIS MEETING.

Procedural motion.

b. THAT THE FACULTY OF OAKLAND NOMINATE FOR THE BACHELOR'S

DEGREE THE STUDENTS NAMED ON THE JUNE GRADUATION LIST
DISTRIBUTED WITH THIS AGENDA.

c. THAT UNIVERSITY HONORS BE AWARDED TO JUNE GRADUATES NAMED
ON A LIST TO BE DISTRIBUTED AT THE SENATE MEETING.

d. THAT THE FACULTY OF OAKLAND NOMINATE FOR THE BACHELOR'S
DEGREE THE STUDENTS NAMED ON THE AUGUST GRADUATION LIST
DISTRIBUTED WITH THIS AGENDA.

e. THAT UNIVERSITY HONORS BE AWARDED TO AUGUST GRADUATES
NAMED ON A LIST DISTRIBUTED WITH THIS AGENDA.

6. Information Items

a. The Steering Committee has received the following memorandum from President O'Dowd dated June 17, 1974.

During the past two years, each of your organizations has been asked to react to a proposed change in internal governance suggested by Governance Commission II. Because of the major changes in governmental structure proposed by the Governance Commission, it was felt that the proposal needed strong support from several groups on campus before the university could move forward with the University Council model. Such support has not been forthcoming; therefore, I wish to terminate formal consideration of the proposal. I trust that the existing governing bodies on campus will continue to work together to strengthen our system of internal governance. Thank you for the time that you put into considering this particular proposal.

b. The Steering Committee has established the following dates for Senate meetings during the 1974-75 year:

Thursday, October 24

Thursday, November 14

Thursday, December 5

Thursday, January 16

Thursday, February 13

Thursday, March 13

Thursday, April 10

All meetings will start at 3:15 p.m.

Additional meetings may be scheduled as necessary.

c. The Steering Committee has received annual reports from the Academic Policy Committee, the Research Committee, and the Teaching and Learning Committee. A copy of these reports are attached to this agenda for the information of senators.

d. The minutes of the previous meetings are enclosed with this agenda:

April 4, 1974

April 11, 1974
April 17, 1974
April 23, 1974
May 31, 1974

Office of the Provost/ss

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