



The Ohio Faculty Council

Draft

Minutes of the Meeting held on April 10, 2009

Present: Fenwick (UA); Gillman (OSU); Bloemer, Lopez (OU); Bourguet (NEOUCOM); King (YSU); Hall, Cuppoletti (UC); Bernhard (BGSU); Milburn (Central State)

12:25 Called to order

Minutes of the March 13, 2009 OFC were approved unanimously.

Chair Cuppoletti reported on the meeting with Chancellor Fingerhut. One subject of discussion was how OFC could be an advisory group to the Chancellor and OBOR. The Chancellor had met with the Chancellor's lawyer who was drafting a Chancellor's Directive regard the advisory status for OFC.

The Second Conditions Report had also been discussed along with OFC's responses, including input from users of new facilities and technologies.

Nominations for Officers for 2009-2010

Rudy Fenwick, University of Akron, was nominated for chair for the two year term: 2009-2011.

Keith Bernard, Bowling Green State University was nominated for vice-chair for the one year term: 2009-2010.

Tammy King, Youngstown State University was nominated for secretary for the one year term: 2009-2010.

Each candidate was elected by acclamation.

A motion was made to have the new OFC website made official before the May OFC meeting. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

New Business

Dr. Jerry Wicks, BGSU, made a presentation on the Ohio Higher Education Rail Network. The proposal would link all Ohio public and private colleges and universities by rail service.

There was a following discussion regarding the feasibility of OHERN, including the cost of construction, the cost of using the network, and whether there was a market for the network.

Dr. Wicks discussed the revenue model for OHERN. If every student and employee of Ohio higher education paid a yearly fee of \$105, it would raise \$86m. An additional \$64m was projected from the purchase of tickets by the general public. Together ticket sales were expected to be \$150m. Estimated yearly operating costs were expected to be \$104m.

The need for a thorough needs assessment was discussed.

Chair Cuppoletti suggested that Dr. Wicks draft exact wording for a resolution for OFC to endorse the proposal by the May OFC meeting. OFC would vote on the motion at the May meeting and then forward it to the Chancellor's office. The motion to do so was passed unanimously.

OFC thanked Dr. Wicks for his work on the OHERN proposal.

OFC then began a discussion of the Draft of the new SSI formula that shift state support for universities from total enrollment to student outcomes, such as course completion and graduation rates.

Concern was expressed that the shift to student outcomes (especially course completion rates) would put pressure on faculty to inflate grades so that more students would pass courses. The pressure would likely be strongest on non-tenure track faculty with yearly contracts and on graduate assistants. Dr. Sudkamp (WSU) and Dr. Lopez (OU) would work on drafting a resolution regarding faculty maintaining high standards.

1:15 Chancellor Fingerhut

The Chancellor began his discussion with OFC on the topic of a proposal to reform construction bidding rules for universities in order that construction projects could move more quickly and efficiently. The proposal had been developed during a conference in the fall of 2008, and the report was just out. He pointed out two ways that contract bidding could be more efficient. One was to follow a common practice in the private sector: design/build. Under this practice universities would pick an entire architecture and construction team before the project began. Second was to hire a contractor who would guarantee the construction price and work with subcontractors to meet the price (construction manager at risk).

New bidding rules would apply to all state construction projects (approximately \$3 billion per year), but universities are the only state entities that bring in private money for construction projects through donors.

Prevailing wage rules would still apply as would minority and female participation rules.

It was estimated that new rules would result in 15-20% or more savings.

There was a major push to get the new rules to be approved in the current state budget.

Contractors had been lobbying against the proposal.

A resolution was introduced that OFC endorse the proposed changes in construction rules and urge university faculty to contact their legislators to support the changes. The resolution was seconded and passed unanimously, with one abstention.

The Chancellor then discussed proposed changes in state provided student financial aid proposed in State Bill 1.

The Ohio College Opportunity Grant Program (OCOG) was now three years old, and had been implemented one class at a time (i.e., freshmen in the first year, sophomores added in the second year, juniors added in the third year, seniors and part time students in the next year). The current aid formula now gives students at for-profit institutions 1.5 times and students at private universities 2 times the aid given students at public universities.

Also, since the program had been created, Pell Grants had increased as part of the federal stimulus bill and tuitions had been frozen. As a result, the total aid of Pell plus OCOG was approximately \$5300 per year, which was more than the tuition at low cost schools, especially community colleges.

It was being proposed that private and for-profit schools be removed from the program, although bloc grants would be available to privates to the degree that they recruited and graduated "Pell eligible" students. It was also proposed that the "Choice" program that gives \$500 to students going to privates be eliminated.

The Chancellor emphasized that the proposal was not cutting aid to community college students. It would bring additional dollars to state universities along with increases in Pell and SSI.

For profit schools were fighting the changes.

Chair Cuppoletti raised the concerns among some faculty that increased emphasis of passing courses and graduation rates in the proposed new SSI formula would put pressure on faculty to inflate grades.

The Chancellor responded that he was empathetic to the concerns and would work with faculty to maintain high classroom standards.

Dr. Wicks briefed the Chancellor on the OHERN proposal.

Q: Schools that are changing to semesters were planning different length semesters; wouldn't this undermine the idea of getting all universities on the same academic calendar?

A: The Chancellor was aware of and studying the issue.

2:15 The Chancellor thanked OFC and Chair Cuppoletti thanked the Chancellor for the discussion.

Campus Reports

NEOUCOM: 50% of NEOUCOM students were staying in Ohio.

BGSU: The school's hockey team had survived its proposed cut.

OSU: Faculty senate had approved the move to semesters, and the proposal was going to the BOT.

R. Gunther (OFC representative) had brain surgery to remove a brain tumor.

The OFC will send a get well card.

OU: Two years ago the administration had mistakenly raised employee health care contributions. The faculty senate had resolved to not let that happen again. One April 13, the senate would debate a resolution to that regard.

UA: President Proenza had received an \$85k bonus for meeting performance criteria.

Central State: Anthony Milburn had been elected the AAUP chapter president.

YSU: President Sweet announced he was stepping down.

The BOT announced it would not take any salary increase. Instead, the money would go for student scholarships.

UC: Approved a 14 week semester.

Undergoing college reorganizations.

Announced that it was cutting scholarships to non-revenue producing athletes.

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New Business

Under provisions of Federal HB 801, research funded by NIH would remain in copyright rather than immediately go into the public domain. OFC should look into this.

2:30 OFC adjourned.

Next meeting: Friday, May 8, 2009.

Respectfully submitted,
Rudy Fenwick
Secretary, Ohio Faculty Council

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