



The Ohio Faculty Council

Minutes of the Meeting held on March 13, 2009

Present: Fenwick (UA); Bloemer, Ingram (OU); Hamilton (SSU); Cuppoletti (UC); Bernhard (BGSU); Cooper (YSU); Sudkamp (WSU); Wolff (UT); Grunther (OSU)

12:15 Meeting called to order by Chair Cuppoletti.

Minutes of the February 13, 2009 meeting approved unanimously.

New Business

Chair Cuppoletti began a discussion about what universities were doing to cope with the effects of the current economic downturn.

UC: There was a \$35m shortfall in the budget and a \$1.4b debt. UC will gain \$19m from budget allocations. The President had suggested major job cuts, and the UC administration was seeking to re-open AAUP contract provisions. There had also been “wild cat” suggestions for furloughs, etc.

UT: There had been suggestions for 1-2 day furloughs.

OSU: Administrators were not getting raises, and there had been suggestions for streamlining the administrative staff.

OU: An early retirement program was being planned. There were larger administrative cuts (?%) than academic (3.5%), but faculty cuts could not be from vacant lines, but must be from operating budgets. OU was in the process of academic restructuring.

YSU: President had stated that YSU is in good shape because of increases in student enrollments, but there would be a 10% in summer classes.

UA: Academic and non-academic units had been asked to prepare two budgets: one with no cuts/increases and one with cuts of 10%. The president had presented “Charting the Course 2020,” which included strategic shifts to health services and especially material sciences. Plan suggests substantial increases in research funding and other resources in these areas. In this announcement, suggested that UA was in fairly good shape, and hopefully would be able to survive downturn with no layoffs.

Shawnee State: There were threats of cuts of 8-15%, but SSU was building a new student center and had paid \$200k for an “image consultant.”

WSU: Was getting \$800k less than expected under the new funding formula for universities, and was engaged in contingency planning for budget cuts.

Overall, it appears that the Chancellor’s plan for increasing students in higher education was going ahead successfully in spite of the economic downturn.

Chair Cuppoletti announced that he was to have a private meeting with Chancellor Fingerhut on March 16, at 6:30pm to discuss governance issues.

Dr. Cuppoletti read a letter outlining the topics he planned to discuss with the Chancellor. It was suggested that OFC should have liaisons on the OBOR and on its various planning committees.

There was discussion as to whether or not this would be the best governance mechanism. Could faculty get to Columbus to attend frequent committee meeting? An alternative might be to have joint OFC forums with the OBOR and IUC.

Chair Cuppoletti then asked OFC members for other potential topics and questions. One suggestion was to ask about the state of legislation in Washington regarding increasing direct federal student loans, as well as the proposal to allow student loans to be repaid through community service.

OFC elections for 2009-2011 officers would take place at the April 10th meeting.

Dr. Sudkamp (WSU) discussed suggestions for changes in the OFC bylaws regarding its officers. It was suggested that the bylaws for membership exclude administrators above the level of department chair.

The bylaw changes passed unanimously.

Campus Reports on Changing to Semesters

OSU

The university senate voted 91-19 to move to semesters in the fall 2012. Fall semesters would be 13 weeks, from early September to mid-December. There would be a 3 week mini term in January. Spring semesters would be from February to mid-May.

UC

Semesters would consist of 2 14-week terms, plus a one week exam period per semester. There would be a 14 week summer semester.

WSU

Semester would be 14 weeks plus exam week. There would be no holiday break between fall and spring semesters. Faculty had approved the plan. Class hours would be 55 minutes.

OU

Semesters would be 15 weeks plus an exam week. There would be a short holiday break between fall and spring

OFC noted that all four years schools would be on semesters by 2012. The total cost of moving to semesters was estimated at \$80m.

Campus Reports

OSU

Proposed assessment instruments for academics would be short and part of the normal student evaluations.

SSU

A proposed ne MA in Education was going to the OBOR.

SSU has 32 associate degree programs. Graduate rates in these programs would no longer count in overall university graduate rates under USO metrics.

SSU was beginning labor negotiations for new contract.

OU

The faculty senate had voted to turn down an administration request to cut back health care benefits, but the president was suggesting that he would go ahead with the cuts.

NEOUCOM

The governor has nearly completed the appointment of the new BOT. One position is still to be appointed. The BOT will have its first meeting in March.

The president and dean has made a recommendation that her position be divided among two persons. It is hoped that the BOT will make an early decision about this recommendation.

We have begun the search for a new dean of medicine. We have also begun the self study for the upcoming medicine accreditation process which will occur in March 2011.

UA

Dr. David Baker has been appointed as interim provost. The president announced a strategic plan, "Charting the Course, 2020" (see above).

UT faculty pressured the UT administration not to use a private company to set up two distance learning MA degrees in the college of education.

YSU

There are two ongoing searches for deans: Health and Human Services and for Fine Arts. The Centers for Excellence process was continuing.

There was a proposal for a PhD in material sciences and engineering

There were planned cuts to summer teaching.

Beginning a student assessment process using e-portfolios.

BGSU

The President was following up with a large scale strategic plan by the end of the spring term.

There was a \$7m budget shortfall.

There was a proposal to build a large arena mostly with the use of private funding.

However, students fear they will end up paying part of the cost through increased student fees.

The BGSU hockey program was rumored to be cut.

The AAUP was initiating a card campaign for collective bargaining.

UC

A Cincinnati newspaper had a story that stated UC was facing \$35m in cuts, and a \$19m increase in SSI.

The president was leaving; an interim was to be named. The search committee for the new president would include 2 elected faculty.

Examining all college bylaws for revision to improve college governance.

2:30 OFC adjourned

Next meeting: Friday, April 10, 2009.

Respectfully submitted,
Rudy Fenwick
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