

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
SENATE ASSEMBLY

Minutes of Meeting, March 20, 1978

ATTENDANCE

Present: Members Angus, Aupperle, Barnett, Bornstein, P. Jones, M. Brown, Browne, Butler, Uttal, Christensen, B. Cohen, P. Cohen, Cooper, Corpron, Crichton, Whitmore, Elving, Fowler, Gay, Gordon, Gray, J. Harris, Heers, Gedney, Hildebrandt, Hungerman, L. Jones, Juvinall, Kish, Leary, Lindberg, Livermore, Merte, Naylor, Penner, Porter, Portman, Proctor, Rabkin, George, Shannon, Wight, Simonds, Sinsheimer, Stross, Tonsor, Votaw, Winans, Schulze, Lehmann

Absent: Members D. Brown, Caldwell, Coon, Saxonhouse, Dingle, A. Edwards, O. Edwards, Fekety, Gelehrter, R. Harris, Kaplan, Millard, Morley, Romani, Tilly, Trojan, West, White, Zorn

Guests: Professor James J. Duderstadt, Chairman, Academic Affairs Committee; Professor William B. Neenan, Chairman, CESF

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 3:15 p.m.

MINUTES

The minutes of February 20, 1978 were approved as written.

COMMENTS ON
SACUA MINUTES

Professor Naylor asked if SACUA had taken up the matter of a tuition pool for GSRA's with President Fleming. Lehmann reported on a meeting of the Executive Officers in which the matter was discussed and turned over for further study to Vice-President Shapiro.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Lehmann called attention to his letter to all members of the Senate inviting nominations for Assembly committees for next year. He urged active participation by Assembly members.

2. Lehmann reported some facts about the University's faculty directory pursuant to the complaints registered in the Assembly last month. There were 15,500 copies of the directory distributed this year at a cost of \$22,000, a cost offset by \$9,000 in advertising revenue. One reason for its tardy appearance is that not all the necessary data are available in the central computer (as they are, for example, at Michigan State University). It is claimed that the directory contains fewer mistakes than Ma Bell's phone directory. Another reason for tardiness was difficulty encountered by the contractor.

3. Tenure Committee report will come in April. We will also have a report on the proposed GSRA tuition pool by Professor Pearson, Chairman of the Budget Priorities Committee.

4. Lehmann thanked the outgoing members of the Assembly for their work over the last three years.

STUDENT
EVALUATION OF
INSTRUCTION

Lehmann distinguished two concerns: the guidelines prepared by the Civil Liberties Board, and the proposal for a University-wide program of evaluation by the Academic Affairs Committee. It was his hope that the two issues might be discussed separately. (Because the issues overlapped significantly, however, his hope subsequently proved vain.) The goal of discussing the guidelines is to enlighten the Civil Liberties Board so that faculty opinion might be more firmly represented in future revisions. Lehmann summarized certain rights that might be distilled from the guidelines. He offered the summary as a focus for the Assembly's consideration. 1) the right to participate in the selection of evaluative instruments; 2) the right to expect that any instrument will accommodate the goals and objectives of the course to which is applied; 3) the right to inspect and respond to evaluations; and 4) the right to have a basic statistical statement of respondent distributions and norms. The right not to participate in student evaluation, but to participate in other forms of evaluation, was then cited as perhaps the pre-eminent right.

Professor Naylor objected to the statement of this most controversial of rights. He thought that the simple right not to participate was compromised by the "but" clause, and suggested that the clause be eliminated. Professor Livermore responded that the intent of the statement is that if teaching appraisals are to be made mandatory, then there might be a need for alternative forms of evaluation. Professor Naylor thought that such a condition did not affect the basic principle of non-participation.

Professor Gordon said that he was puzzled by the decision to ask CRLT to author a University-wide evaluation program. Professor Duderstadt, Chairman of the Academic Affairs Committee replied that the CRLT model seemed a good one, and needed to be recognized and funded by the administration in order to operate.

Professor Jones asked about the estimated cost of a University-wide program. Professor Duderstadt said that a budget request has been prepared asking for \$37,000 to perform the data processing for a 50% course penetration.

Professor Uttal criticized the assumption in the Academic Affairs report that duplication of evaluation efforts

across the campus leads necessarily to inefficiency. Duderstadt said that a major reason for a centralized program was the desire to implement the Civil Liberties Board guidelines. The diversity of programs that now exists makes such implementation all but impossible. A University-wide program would establish appropriate standards even if it were not mandatory--and, indeed, it is intended primarily as a model and an available option for the schools and colleges.

Professor Gordon asked if CRLT should charge its expenses to the units that adopt its service. Duderstadt was unsure what final arrangements would be made. To begin the program, funding from the central administration is necessary. There is not an adequate administrative structure at present.

Professor Kish said that the proposal from Academic Affairs provided suasion for some schools to make use of guidance in constructing good programs of evaluation. The proposal deserves Assembly support.

Professor Elving said, however, that he was unclear about the use to which evaluations were to be put. He could imagine that instructors and administrators want to know different things. He described an evaluation used in his own laboratory course as a valuable aid to the teacher but of doubtful value to anyone else. Professor Duderstadt reminded the Assembly that a basic aim of evaluations was to provide consumer information to students, information that might have considerable impact on enrollments.

Professor Gordon described his own attempt to have the School of Social Work adopt the CRLT service. He liked the feature that the service was oriented to the use of individual instructors, who alone received reports. Professor Lehmann explained that it was only the instruction and not the instructor that would properly be evaluated.

Professor Bornstein said that the issue of whether there will be a University-wide form developed for students to use is different from the issue of the civil liberties of faculty. He was also unsure that the terms "sophisticated" and "primitive" as applied to existing evaluation forms were entirely appropriate. The meaning of the terms might shift in different contexts.

Professor Hildebrandt cited the question posed by Vice-President Shapiro as to whether or not anonymous evaluations of any kind can legally enter official records. Professor Duderstadt acknowledged that the question was still open. Hildebrandt then suggested that currently schools and colleges are free to impose upon themselves any evaluation

program they wish, without concern for the civil liberties of faculty members. Professor Lehmann said that such safeguards should be our focus.

Professor Elving wondered whether our concern was to prevent distorted information about courses or to protect incompetent faculty. Professor Kish thought that the distinction was impossible to maintain in practice. Any program of evaluation may infringe on one's liberties, and we may be unable to prevent every unjustified use. The issue is how to do the best job we can.

Professor Porter pointed out the usefulness of a good program of evaluation of teaching in the consideration of faculty for promotion.

Professor Uttal returned to his criticism of the Academic Affairs proposal. It seemed to him to encourage more bureaucratization. He thought that a centralized program might be less rather than more efficient. He asked what rights that might now be violated would be protected. Duderstadt asked, in response, who could monitor the protection of rights over the vast extent and diversity of existing programs. Mistakes would continue to be made, but the CRLT program might be easier to monitor, and would provide quick results.

Professor B. Cohen asked if independent programs of evaluation would not continue even if we had a central program. Professor Lehmann replied that he thought not. Professor Angus asked if students were dissatisfied with their own programs. Duderstadt thought that the CRLT system would answer needs of students. Professor Elving continued this line of speculation, asking if students would accept official University information.

Hillary Miller, a student member of the Academic Affairs Committee, spoke to the issue. She described current evaluations as insufficient and biased, as providing inadequate information to students. She strongly favored an organized system, and was sure students would make use of it.

Professor Votaw wondered whether or not the establishment of a University-wide system through CRLT would mean that everyone would have to use it. Duderstadt thought that CRLT simply provided an attractive model, that there would be a decentralized administration of evaluations, and that Vice-President Shapiro would want the units to shoulder their share of the expenses and determine the use to which they would be put.

Professor Penner voiced concern with the sheer fact that data would be generated and that the need to monitor

its accuracy and use would become essential. Professor Livermore explained that the Civil Liberties Board wants to create guarantees to govern the use of the information being generated now. They need the faculty's reaction to what might be the four or five most important guarantees. Professor Lehmann added that irresponsibility and distortion plague current practices.

Professor Simonds outlined three purposes that might govern the use of data: 1) the students need information about courses; 2) the faculty needs to improve its performance; and 3) the administration needs data for promotions and salaries. The purposes are not entirely harmonious. Different forms should probably be developed to answer these different purposes.

Professors Gordon and Bornstein then urged a return to the question of faculty rights. Bornstein asked for an example. Professor Corpron supplied the example of slanderous material being put into an instructor's file without his knowledge.

The deliberation concluded without producing either further serious objection or significant addition to the formulation of faculty rights initially proposed by Professor Lehmann.

RESOLUTION RE
NEW SOCIAL
SECURITY LAW

A position paper on the impact of the new social security legislation was distributed to the Assembly, authored by Professor Aupperle and supported by Professor Naylor. It argues the potential hardship the new law will cause both faculty and the University. The following resolution was attached:

"The Senate Assembly requests CESF to evaluate and project the impact of the new Social Security law on our faculty's salaries over the next ten-year period and report both its findings and any recommendations to us at the May, 1978 meeting."

Professor Neenan, Chairman of CESF, was asked to speak to the resolution. Neenan first described some salient details of the new law. The tax will increase over the next ten years from the present 12.1% of the first \$17,700 to 14.3% of the first \$42,600. The maximum payment by individuals for any year goes from under \$1,000 to more than \$3,000.

Will the faculty lose financially? Professor Neenan thought, yes. What can we do? The first possibility that comes to mind is withdrawal from the system, but withdrawal is possible only by the University as a whole. Faculty make up only 25% of the University community, and most of the other 75% do not stand to lose by the new law. Hence,

in practical terms, withdrawal from the system is not a viable option. Neenan also felt there would be strong pressure from Congress to prevent withdrawal by those very people whom they have decided to tax more heavily than before.

Other possibilities of action fall into two classes. Politically, we could work to have Congress roll back its schedule of increases by transferring part of the burden of Social Security benefits to general revenue funds. Internally, we could work to develop a program of flexible benefits so that increases in payroll taxes might be offset by reductions in other forms of contribution. The principle of flexible benefits has been recommended by CESF on other grounds for years.

Professor M. Brown spoke in favor of the resolution. He thought it represented at least, a little noise on our behalf. Professor B. Cohen, however, thought it too narrow a charge to CESF, which should be looking into dozens of issues. Professor Naylor argued that it was wholly appropriate for the Assembly to voice opinion on particular issues that affect the faculty. He was joined by Professor Aupperle, who spelled out the degree of the rise in payroll taxes, and the serious impact this will have on both faculty members and on the University's budget. Professor Elving noted that the new law may have an important effect on the individual's choice of retirement options.

Professor Uttal asked what positive goals would be served in the society at large by the University's withdrawal from the system. He thought perhaps more harm than good would come of it.

Professor Kish asked if Social Security benefits were keeping up with inflation. Professor Neenan replied affirmatively. Benefits have been rising fast, and since 1972 rise automatically in relation to the CPI. He added that for CESF to do an adequate study would take a lot of money and time. It would probably lie beyond the capability of CESF to do it properly.

Professor Livermore asked if CESF could study the relation of Social Security to other benefits enjoyed by faculty. Neenan answered, yes.

Ms. George asked that the resolution be amended to extend the time-frame for reporting and to include other job families in the University in its consideration. Professor Aupperle accepted the advice as a friendly amendment.

Professor Uttal suggested that the amendment be broadened to include consideration of the society at large.

Professor Rabkin advised that creative thinking needs to be done on the issue, however broadly or narrowly conceived. Professor Sinsheimer thought that here was a good opportunity for the Assembly to go on record in support of the idea of flexible benefits. Professor Livermore suggested that the resolution substitute the term compensation for salaries. Aupperle accepted the substitution as another friendly amendment.

Professor Jones thought that the resolution was a kind of political action, however primitive. He was against amendments that sought to de-focus, broaden, or delay an expression of faculty opinion.

The Assembly proceeded to vote on the amendments.

1. To change "our faculty's" to "the University community's" passed.
2. To change "salaries" to "compensation" passed.
3. To change "at the May, 1978 meeting" to "next fall" passed.

The resolution was then passed as amended.

AGE
DISCRIMINATION
LEGISLATION

Summaries of the recent federal legislation and of pending state legislation were distributed for information.

Professor Elving asked if mandatory retirement at the University would be abrogated. Lehmann answered, yes; he added that Representative Bullard, in a meeting with the State Relations Committee, had been informed of various problems the abrogation of our rule would cause.

Professor Rabkin, commenting on the exemption of faculty from the federal legislation, said he felt his constitutional rights had been violated. Professor Livermore pointed out that the federal law allows state laws on the issue to take precedence where they may be beneficial to the individual.

Professor Lehmann reported that the issue was raised in SACUA's last meeting with President Fleming.

RECOMMENDA-
TIONS OF
FINANCIAL
AFFAIRS COM-
MITTEE ON
UNIVERSITY
INVESTMENT
POLICIES

The Report and Recommendations of the Committee, dated February 28, 1978 were distributed for information.

Professor Gordon noted that the recommendations had proved influential on the Regents. He would have welcomed an opportunity to have discussed the report and recommendations in the Assembly. Professor Lehmann noted that there had been a time problem. He, too, would have welcomed Assembly consideration.

OLD BUSINESS

Professor Kish asked about the status of the HMO proposal. Professor Neenan reported that the Administration has hired two persons to do the hard planning necessary for implementation, perhaps by the fall of 1979. Professor Sinsheimer said that the Regents had approved the two staff positions, but that nobody had yet been hired.

Professor Elving raised the issue of the academic calendar and spoke against its shrinkage. Why do classes now begin on Friday each term instead of Thursday? The loss of class time, he felt, was especially serious in laboratory courses. He asked SACUA to inquire into the problem. Professor Hungerman added a question to the charge to SACUA: How long will term IIIA be the focus of budget cuts? Professor Kish noted that we no longer have three true semesters or trimesters. Perhaps it is time we returned, he thought, to a single summer session.

ADJOURNMENT

The Assembly then adjourned at 5:17 p.m.

Earl J. Schulze
Senate Secretary

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