

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

SENATE ASSEMBLY

Minutes of Regular Meeting of 20 March 1989

ATTENDANCE

Present: S. Smith, Russell, Blane, Brooks, Cameron, Chesler, Chudacoff, Dandekar, Debler, DeCamp, Diana, Dobbins, Dressman, Eggertsen, Foss, Gage, Greenwood, Grosse, Duell, Levine, Houk, Kelsey, Ketefian, Lenaghan, M. Lomax, R. Lomax, Margolis, Markey, McLaughlin, McLeod, Meyer, Meyerhoff, Moore, Morris, Mosher, Nadelman, Olson, Owens, Radine, Reed, Rosenthal, Smouse, Marcelo, Tentler, To, Turner, Warner, Whitehouse, P. Smith, Winn, Wrobleski, Yano, Wulff

Absent: Barlow, Birdsall, Alpern, Borcherts, Connelly, Craig, Croxton, Davis, Dirks, Floyd, Gilgenbach, Goldberg, Gray, Gull, Haefner, Hinton, Kirking, Levy, McDonald, Mignolo, Ness, Potter, Sargous, Scodel, Seligman, Friedman

Professor Beth Reed convened the meeting at 3:15 p.m.

MINUTES

The minutes of 20 February 1989, were approved as submitted.

MATTERS ARISING

Professor Reed announced that Jack Weidenbach would present the annual report of the Director of Athletics in the absence of Glenn (Bo) Schembechler.

Professor Reed called attention to SACUA minutes distributed with the Senate Assembly Agenda. Professor Cameron inquired whether and when a final draft of the Harassment Policy would appear in the Record. Reed said she did not know what the plans were but would recommend publication when the final draft is complete. Reed called attention to the summary of the campus parking study distributed for this meeting. Jerry Miller, chair of the study group, concurred with Reed's recommendation that faculty and staff respond to the study. Silence will be interpreted as assent. Professor S. Smith, commenting from the floor, predicted rage on the part of faculty and staff at the projected cost of parking fees. Professor P. Smith noted the need for a new configuration of space in parking structures to accommodate taller vehicles. Professor Reed promised to carry the study forward to another agenda. Professor Warner suggested that representatives take this discussion back to the units and prepare a response. Professor Diana mentioned the crowding caused by parking vehicles which belong to construction workers in the structures.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Following distribution of the ballots, Professor Blane moved to close the nominations. The motion was seconded by Professor Nadelman and adopted unanimously.

The next Assembly meeting will be held April 17th. That will be the last meeting for those Senate Assembly members who are serving the third year of their term. SACUA election ballots were distributed for election of members to SACUA. The three new SACUA members are: Peggie Hollingsworth (Medicine), Walter Debler (Engineering), and James Diana (Natural Resources).

FACULTY QUESTIONS: DUAL CAREER COUPLES POLICY

Professor Reed introduced Colleen Dolan-Greene, Assistant Vice-President for Academic Affairs-Personnel. Professor Reed read the question which prompted the invitation to Ms. Dolan-Greene:

What are the Administration's plans about a better policy towards two-career couples? Having abandoned the old nepotism policies, we now operate by ad hoc arrangement. Two common dubious practices are the stringing along of "captive" spouses on lecturer or adjunct appointments and payment of a salary in one unit by another unit in order to retain a spouse. When queried about this situation last year, then Vice President Duderstadt said there was consideration of a new vice provost level office for coordinating the University's treatment of couples. This is increasingly urgent. The crafting of such a policy ought to take strongly into account faculty concerns about excellence and diversity but at the same time recognize that more and more academics will be married to other academics.

Ms. Dolan-Greene began her presentation with a review of the kinds of contacts which her office receives. Initial contacts are usually made by the chair of the search committee but may come from a department chair or a dean. In the Spring, contacts of this kind are characteristic of the Spring Rush. In the Fall and in January, contacts are usually initiated by a spouse after a move has been completed.

A faculty spouse is usually a professional but often not looking for a faculty position. For these people, there are good opportunities for placement at the University and in the surrounding community. In general, junior faculty will accept a position and the spouse is willing to take a chance on placement. A senior faculty move is more complex. Her office can provide assistance identifying other opportunities in Southeast Michigan if a faculty appointment is sought. Efforts are being made to enhance the system for people in professions who are seeking employment outside the academic community. Consideration is

being given to retaining professional placement services to expand the search for opportunities outside the Ann Arbor and Washtenaw County area. People are willing to commute; sometimes long distances. For spouses seeking employment on campus, referrals are made to the three University employment offices: Medical Center, Administrative Services, and Schools, Colleges, Institutes and Libraries.

Professor Winn stated that he has developed a concern for our ability to match the kinds of opportunities available at other institutions to two faculty career couples. Potential faculty have been lost when a spouse could not be placed appropriately. He also cited abuses with which he was familiar. First, departments cross-paying salaries, i.e., one department may pay the salary of the spouse in another department. Second, the accompanying spouse may be strung along for years in low paying positions as a lecturer or research assistant. He mentioned the University of Oregon as an institution which has created a policy on hiring dual career couples and suggested that the University of Michigan should also create such a policy.

Dolan-Greene replied that indeed the University does not have a policy and consideration is being given to the development of one. Reed extended an invitation to Dolan-Greene to provide an update on her progress with the policy in the future.

DISCUSSION OF FLEXIBLE BENEFIT PLANS

Professor Reed introduced Larry Root, Chair of the Committee on the Economic Status of the Faculty (CESF). Professor Root introduced Richard Lichtenstein, a member of CESF and an expert on Staff Benefits. He also introduced Professor Jesse Gordon and Don Thiel, indicating they would be available to answer questions at the end of the presentation.

Professor Root directed the Assembly's attention to the article in the Record of March 20 on flexible benefits. After a brief review of the history of staff benefits, he characterized a flexible benefit plan as one which allows employees to select from an array of possible benefits. These plans have three key components: the amount of flexible dollars available to the employee, the nature of the "core" benefits, and the nature of the other options. Under most plans, choices are not entirely open; some basic level of insurance coverage may be required. This minimum required coverage is referred to as core benefits. The advantage of flexible benefits is the ability to tailor a package to one's own need.

The disadvantages are less obvious. First, they introduce new complexity into the administration of benefits and can increase the overhead expenditures. A second issue is the allocation of inflation risk. Under traditional plans, an increase in the cost of benefits requires an adjustment in funding by the employer. Under a flexible plan, no such

adjustment is necessary. Inflation may simply reduce the purchasing power of the employees' flex-dollars. A third issue is the influence of a flexible plan on the cost of the individual benefits. Because participants select the benefits they are most likely to use, the cost of those benefits tends to rise.

The structure of employee benefits reflects an implicit social policy. Flexible plans are "fair" in the sense that employees have the same benefit "value" without regard to their personal or family situation. On the other hand, traditional plans often have redistributive aspects that recognize differences in "need."

Professor Gordon reported on the activity of the UM's Cafeteria Plan Committee, which has been meeting since last April. The Committee has been working with advisors from the Alexander & Alexander Consulting Group Inc. in Detroit. In addition, the Office of Staff Benefits and Alexander & Alexander have met with CESF representatives at Ann Arbor and Dearborn and with a general employee group at Flint. The Committee will complete a final draft soon and submit it to the Executive Officers.

Professor Whitehouse opened the discussion with a series of questions concerning plans for further consultation with the faculty. Professor Gordon replied that the committee had met with faculty bodies mentioned earlier and with focus groups in which faculty participated. The report will be submitted to Vice President Womack and he presumes it will then be sent to faculty governance committees such as Financial Affairs and CESF for review and consultation.

Don Thiel remarked that no decision has been made on the advisability of adopting a flexible benefit plan and no move has been made to implement one. Jesse Gordon reiterated that the recommendation of the study committee would include a process for review and discussion.

Professor Debler asked whether the flex package would include pre- and post-maternity or child care benefits. Professor Gordon indicated that the study was limited to the existing mix of benefits and does not contemplate additional ones. Professor Root added that including such issues in a flexible plan may not be the best approach. It could, for example, lead to spending flex dollars to buying leave time. In response to a question from Professor Whitehouse about changing the dental plan, Professor Gordon indicated that one could allocate flex dollars to an augmental dental plan.

Professor Grosse asked when we would know the costs of a flex plan. Professor Gordon replied that cost estimates could be made after the committee recommendations were available. He also noted that the University has been talking about flexible benefits for twelve years and referred to the pluses and minuses

of flex and fixed plans outlined by Professor Root. The underlying question is: do we want to pool our risk as a collegium or do we want to focus on maximizing benefits to individuals?

Professor Chudacoff inquired what would happen if people who did not need a benefit did not select it. Professor Gordon said that the cost would increase.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF ATHLETICS

Professor Reed introduced Jack Weidenbach, Associate Director of Athletics, who presented the report in the absence of the Director, Glenn (Bo) Schembechler. Weidenbach opened with a review of women's athletics. Fifteen additional full scholarships for women were available this year; eleven will be added next year. That will bring funding to 98% of the NCAA recommendation. Raising coaches' salaries and equalizing transportation required about \$250,000. He reported that renovations to the Matt Mann Pool cost \$550,000. This expense is viewed as one step toward improving the opportunity for all sports at Michigan, especially the non-revenue sports.

Professor Reed opened the discussion with a commendation for the increased local advertising for women's sports. She expressed pleasure at seeing this level of attention and respect offered to the UM athletes, a respect they earn and deserve.

Professor Diana asked whether there are comparable numbers of scholarships for comparable sports (e.g., men's and women's basketball)? Mr. Weidenbach indicated that the effort was to be comparable with peer institutions in order to be competitive in recruiting. All scholarships come from athletic department revenue. When asked by Professor Dobbins whether women could participate in men's programs, Weidenbach laughed and said he could not respond to the question.

Prompted by a faculty question, Weidenbach described the department's projected deficit. The debt results from several factors: debt service on the natatorium; added costs of the women's program, and a not very good "away" schedule. The deficit will be covered out of departmental reserves this year. New revenue must then be found for next year or the department must decide how many sports to support. The Board in Control is looking at review processes, and thought is being given to the "elasticity" of ticket prices. The athletic programs are covered out of receipts, and the big two are football and basketball.

In response to a question from Professor Dobbins, Weidenbach reported that little money is earned from swimming. He went on to say that the department has not asked for General Fund revenue to support women's or non-revenue sports. Professor Meyer inquired whether other Big 10 departments were similarly

funded. Weidenbach replied that Illinois is asking for General Funds this year and that Minnesota did not receive such funding.

Professor Warner introduced questions about academic support for athletes. Weidenbach described the two centers which track athlete's progress and provide assistance. If grades are not maintained, the students appear before the Academic Performance Committee. Eleven students have appeared this year. For the first time, the committee is reviewing the freshperson programs. Academic records vary by sport. Professor Winn asked whether there were class attendance requirements for athletes. No, replied Weidenbach, the rules are the same for all students. The final question, from Professor Foss, asked about basic support programs for Math, English, etc. Weidenbach cited the Use Skills Center run by John Hagen and his group.

Professor Reed announced the results of the SACUA election. The new members are: Peggie Hollingsworth, Medicine; Walter Debler,; James Diana, LSA.

ADJOURNMENT

There being neither old nor new business, Professor Reed adjourned the meeting at 5 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

L. Yvonne Wulff
Senate Secretary, pro tem