

Minutes of the Senate Assembly Meeting of 30 September 1996
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THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
SENATE ASSEMBLY MEETING

MINUTES OF 30 SEPTEMBER 1996

Chair Dunn convened the meeting at 3:17 P.M.

MATERIALS DISTRIBUTED

1. Agenda for 30 September 1996
2. SACUA and Senate Assembly Skeletal Agendas, Fall 1996
3. Minutes of the Senate Assembly meeting of 15 April 1996
4. Draft minutes of the Senate Assembly meeting of 20 May 1996
5. Announcement: The Impact of Value Centered Management on Interdisciplinary Programs and Research
6. Announcement: Academic Freedom: A Trial Judge's View
7. Announcement: Financial Concerns of Students

CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES OF 20 MAY 1996

The minutes of 20 May 1996 were approved with two corrections.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chair Dunn reminded Senate Assembly members about the four action items approved at the May meeting of the Assembly, as listed in the approved minutes. Professor Dunn welcomed the new members to the Assembly, and asked that they stand for a moment of welcome and recognition by the full membership. Dunn reported that the SACUA staff had assisted him with a compilation of voting returns on the previous election of members. He said that across all units, the mean voting response was 74%, and that in some schools the return rate for ballots was 100%. He noted that these rates were high and impressive by any standard of comparison, and he congratulated the new Assembly members on their election by peers to positions of responsibility in faculty governance.

Chair Dunn next called attention to three announcements distributed to the membership of the Senate Assembly (items 5, 6, and 7). He noted that Judge Cohn would deliver the Academic Freedom Lecture for 1996 on 21 October 1996 in the Lydia Mendelssohn Theater. He added that the 1997 Academic Freedom Lecture will be delivered by Professor Roger Wilkins on 17 March 1997. Dunn also reported that the Budget Study Committee of the Senate Assembly will hold two forums on financial concerns of students, as listed in item 7, and that concerns about Value Centered Management would be addressed in a forum sponsored jointly by the Senate Assembly, Sigma Xi, and the Academic Women's Caucus (item 5).

Chair Dunn reminded Senate Assembly members that the 28 October meeting of the Assembly would occur in the North Campus Commons, rather than in Rackham, and that Provost Machen would speak at that meeting.

REPORT FROM THE BUDGET STUDY COMMITTEE

Chair Dunn introduced Professor Duell, chair of the Budget Study Committee, who provided summary comments about the committee report, dated April 1996, that had been distributed to Senate Assembly members in May. Professor Duell explained that committee members had obtained access to the Facility Management Information System, which contains detailed information on a building by building basis for the university. She noted that the report makes suggestions about how to conserve the costs of utilities, which can be high. She expressed concern that the extensive building activities undertaken for the campus seem to have ignored in budget projections the increased operating costs, which added \$4 million to this year's budget. She also reported that in the cases of 3 renovation projects, those for C.C. Little, Natural Science, and West Engineering, operating costs had actually increased after the renovations. Professor Duell said that the report also included the information that tuition revenues had increased from \$169 million in 1985-86 to \$455 million in 1995-96, or 10.6% per year, which is well above the Consumer Price Index. She referred Senate Assembly members to the report itself for details and additional information. No questions were offered from the floor.

REMARKS BY INTERIM PRESIDENT HOMER NEAL

Chair Dunn introduced President Neal at 3:40 P.M. President Neal said that a five page letter will be coming to the entire faculty soon regarding the issue of Executive Officer compensation. He added that if Senate Assembly members wish him to return to talk about the matter after they read the statement, he will be happy to answer questions at a future meeting.

President Neal then expressed his intentions to pursue some initiatives during his term as Interim President, explaining that some activities can't wait or shouldn't wait. He said that challenges are still with us regarding race and gender representation on the faculty. He reviewed the current status of student enrollment, graduation rates, and expenditures for research and development, noting that the budget projection for this year is \$430 million, making the University of Michigan second only to Johns Hopkins University in R&D funding. He said that any crumbling of support for faculty affects the whole university.

President Neal displayed a flow diagram of university objectives in which five outcomes were specified: money, research results, excellent graduate education, excellent undergraduate education, and service. The diagram also included three sub-objectives: excellent graduate students, excellent faculty, and strong faculty culture. He noted that donors like to give money to top-ranked schools. Neal said that of the 5200 new undergraduates matriculating this year, 820 had all "A's" in high school, and that 650 were ranked in the top one percent of their classes. He said that the appointment of new

deans to the Rackham School of Graduate Studies, School of Engineering, and School of Natural Resources and Environment were important developments, as was the achievement of the \$1 billion goal in the Campaign for Michigan.

President Neal introduced a list of topics that he identified as themes for the interim period. These themes were

1. ensure a sense of campus continuity and community
2. preserve recent advances, such as improved relations with the State government
3. capture new opportunities
4. act on time-sensitive issues, such as those affecting the University Hospital
5. lay the groundwork for a new administration, including transfer of responsibilities to a new Chief Financial Officer
6. assist the Regents with the installation of a new president.

President Neal then articulated some of his priorities. He expressed interest in initiating a renovation project for Hill Auditorium, and he invited feedback from Senate Assembly members. He said that he was expanding communication through publication of a newsletter titled "In the Interim", for which the task of writing a major article will rotate among the major officers. He said that he would like to have a forum or town meeting to talk about our values as a university. He reported the appointment of a University of Michigan Advisory Panel, with membership from faculty, staff, administration, students, alumni, and one former Regent.

President Neal then reviewed some changes that he anticipated for the near future. He said that he expects that an Executive Vice President for Medical Affairs will be hired, and that the chief administrators of both the Hospital and the Medical School will report to this individual. He said that the Michigan Health Corporation has been capitalized with \$30 million to develop health care and patient networks. He said that a new committee chaired by Dean Boylan will address campus climate through a study of campus security. Neal said that the status of the Michigan Mandate will be addressed in a report by the Executive Officers to the Regents in October. He said that a search was underway for someone from the faculty to lead the Michigan Agenda for Women on a half-time appointment basis. He said that he would like to appoint a committee to look into the problem of retention of minority faculty.

President Neal next announced his intent to develop a series of undergraduate initiatives. He said that the goal of his initiatives was to provide all willing undergraduates with experiences in research, scholarship, and creative activity in ways that encourage creative approaches and avoid overburdening the faculty. He noted that many primary research scientists, clinical faculty, and faculty of professional schools had expressed interest in assisting with this objective. He said that a solicitation for the Presidential Initiatives Fund would soon be announced, with total funds available at \$1 million for this year. Neal said that the successful applications should be unusual and innovative, high risk/high gain, and as a new feature of the program this year, should involve undergraduates.

President Neal concluded by reporting that a new statute enacted by the Michigan State Legislature and signed into law directs state institutions of higher learning to remove abortion coverage from health benefits packages in collective bargaining agreements. He concluded his remarks at 4:18 P.M. and invited questions from the audience.

Professor Gobetti remarked that the number of administrative hires seems to have been increasing relentlessly. He asked how many of the new hires identified as "faculty" are in truth administrators with faculty courtesy appointments. He asked also why a new administrator will be hired to oversee both the Hospital Director and Dean of the Medical School, rather than combining both latter positions into one. President Neal replied that if the positions of Dean and Director were merged, faculty might become unhappy because running the hospital takes too much time. He added that the hospital might also be run inefficiently because the incumbent might stress academic value over operating efficiency. Regarding administration, Neal claimed that in many areas the University of Michigan is lean on staff. He said that owing to the complexity of the institution, trouble often arises where we are understaffed. Neal said that VCM is supposed to make every unit look at its administration. He said that if you find a way to eliminate an administrative position, you can use the funds for students, faculty, or other opportunities.

Professor Nagel asked President Neal to amplify his remarks about Hill Auditorium. Neal replied that most of the building activities over the recent past had a clear champion. He said that Hill Auditorium is a campus treasure, but that its restrooms and seats are substandard. Neal said that he has a short time in which he can perhaps renovate Hill Auditorium, but that it will be necessary to raise the money because the State will not support a performing arts center. He said that it will take a collective effort, and that the project must be listed as a campus priority.

Professor MacAdam asked with what projects Neal most needed help. Neal replied that the undergraduate research initiative will work only if faculty are willing. He said that we do not want a program of compulsion. He asked for honest feedback and suggestions of how to do it. President Neal said that this was his #1 priority.

Chair Dunn thanked President Neal for his remarks and responses at 4:28 P.M.

OLD BUSINESS

No old business was presented.

NEW BUSINESS

No new business was presented.

The meeting adjourned at 4:29 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

John T. Lehman
Senate Secretary