

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

SENATE ASSEMBLY

Minutes of Regular Meeting, November 20, 1978

ATTENDANCE

Present: Aupperle, Barnett, Baumgarten, Berg, McClendon, Brazer, D. Brown, Caldwell, Cohen, Cooper, Corpron, Crichton, Dabich, Diamond, Dingle, Eckert, Elving, Flener, Fowler, Gay, George, Gordon, Harris, Rush, Hinerman, Hungerman, Jones, Lyon, Koran, Leary, Lindberg, Lynch-Sauer, Merte, Naylor, Gabrielson, Parkinson, Penner, Porter, Portman, Rabkin, Burckhalter, Tilly, Trojan, Grassmuck, Vasse, Winans, Zorn.

Absent: Angus, M. Brown, Browne, Scearse, Coon, Frost, Fekety, Friedman, Gull, Herbert, Morley, Nisbett, Powers, Poznanski, Cornell, Abdel-Massih, Simonds, Tonsor, Verhey, White.

Guests: Professors Emily Cloyd, W. Robert Dixon, Richard Lempert, Tenure Committee; Professor Harold Johnson, Chairman, Faculty Committee on the Presidency; Dr. Ernest Zimmermann, Office of Academic Affairs .

CALL TO ORDER

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

MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of October 23 were accepted as written.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Chairman Livermore reminded the Assembly of the Senate meeting that would convene at 4:15 p.m.
2. The resignation of Mrs. Janice Downs was announced. Her successor, Mrs. Olivia Birdsall, was introduced to the Assembly.
3. Professor Harold Johnson, Chairman of the Faculty Committee on the Presidency, was then introduced. Professor Johnson said that his committee has held its first formal meeting, and that some of its members had met informally with some of the Regents and with Professor Livermore. He affirmed that there would be a continual flow of information. The first task of the Committee, he said, was to prepare a statement on the needs of the University, a statement that would be completed and forwarded to the Regents by next week. The Regents own statement on needs will

then be written, and form the basis for a working statement on the characteristics to be sought in a new President. Professor Johnson hoped that the process of the search would reach its conclusion in the spring, and a new President be installed by September of next year.

NOMINATIONS
AND APPOINT-
MENTS

The Assembly approved the nomination of Professor Michael Clark Ass't Professor of English to the State Relations Committee for a two-year term.

UNIVERSITY CAL-
ENDAR (JONES
PROPOSAL AND
SHAPIRO PRO-
POSAL)

Professor Jones was asked to present the issues. He gave a brief history of the trimester system at Michigan and of the reviews conducted by the Hay Committee (1969) and the Zander Committee (1977), the former confirming the usefulness of the trimester system with the stipulation that Fall Term classes begin after Labor Day, the latter considering changes in the Calendar as a way of saving energy, but recommending none. In contrast with these reviews of the entire system, SACUA has restricted its review (the Jones proposal) to ways of fine-tuning the system's operation. The Shapiro proposal is a response that attempts to recapture as many teaching days in each term as possible, given the stipulation that classes begin every year after Labor Day. Jones described the basic difference between the two proposals: The Jones proposal increases the length by only a little but achieves uniform length; the Shapiro proposal sacrifices the uniformity of term-length from year to year but achieves greater number of teaching days. The question is, is it more important to have a uniform number of teaching days in each term, or simply as many such days as possible.

Jones described the reaction of several other groups to his proposal. The LSA faculty, for example, found it generally unobjectionable, but preferred the status-quo. They expressed particular concern over commencing fall classes on the Tuesday following Labor Day. He listed some of the problems that would be created by any change in the Calendar. He then called for comments from the Assembly.

Professor Elving argued that the whole system should be re-examined. The status-quo benefits research activities, but creates difficulties for the organization of instruction, especially in laboratory courses. We no longer expect Term III to become as important as the other two terms, so the old argument for starting Term I after Labor Day has disappeared.

Professor Harris asked what the enrollments were in Term III. Dr. Zimmermann answered that summer enrollments are about one-third the size of those in Terms I and II.

Professor Grassmuck noted that "days" rather than "hours" had been used as a measure in the two proposals. He pointed out that there were many hours in the week--for example in the evenings and on Saturdays--that had not been utilized for teaching. Professor Jones acknowledged the point, but defended the use of "days" in making a calendar. He then called for a straw vote on several questions:

Should there be a fundamental review of the trimester system? Yes--14 No--25

Should we forget about fine-tuning the system? Yes--0 No--37

Should we begin class the Tuesday following Labor Day? Yes--37 No--1

Should study days be reduced from three to two? Yes--27 No--4

Should we recommend the Shapiro or the Jones proposal? Shapiro--3 Jones--27. Professor Jones promised to transmit the results to Vice President Shapiro.

Professor Brazer then asked whether or not there could be a compromise on starting the Tuesday after Labor Day every term. He found no urgency to do so when Labor Day fell on the first or second of September. Jones responded that he found the idea of beginning Term I on the same day every year very attractive, a real aid in planning.

Former Chairman of the Tenure Committee, Professor W. Robert Dixon was introduced to lead the discussion. He in turn introduced Professor Richard Lempert who had written portions of the policy statement. Professor Lempert provided a rationale for those parts of the statement that changed existing policy as represented in the Regents' By-Laws. He said that the spirit in which the document was prepared had two features: 1. That the proposed policy should not conflict with the Regents' By-Laws; and 2. That it should make counter-interpretations where necessary to the attempt of the Nordby document to interpret the meaning of the By-Laws. Thus, where the meaning of the By-Laws was unclear, there was no constraint to repeat their language. Where gaps in coherence appeared in the By-Laws, there was an attempt to fill them, usually by resorting to AAUP documents. Also there was an attempt to make sensible statements on matters covered neither by the By-Laws and/or AAUP recommendations.

Professor Lempert proceeded to two examples in the Tenure Committee policy statement. He explained in each case the need for clarifying existing policy, and the nature of the clarification proposed. He explained the

PROPOSED
TENURE POLICY,
SECTIONS 5, 6,
7 AND ADDENDUM

use of the concept of "clear and convincing evidence" in Tenure Committee hearings, and the meaning of the Tenure Committee's proposed authority to "reverse the decision of the original committee" (where "reverse" is used in the technical sense of voiding or "vacating"). He acknowledged that such use of legal language may have created difficulties in understanding parts of the proposed policy.

Professor Dixon then asked the Assembly for its comments on Section 6--cases involving financial exigency.

Professor Berg asked what kind of crisis would it be that might threaten the finances of the University as a whole? Professor Dixon responded that in this the statement was following AAUP statements. He conceded the difficulty of applying the definition of crisis to this University.

Professor Cloyd pointed out that the existing document on Program Discontinuance offered guidance on this issue, and the Tenure Committee statement would have to be harmonized with it. Professor Dixon noted that SACUA is given special responsibilities in determining when financial exigency has occurred.

There was no more time for discussion. Professor Dixon urged Assembly members to communicate any further questions or revisions directly to the Tenure Committee, which has begun the task of preparing proposals for action.

Professor Livermore thanked Professor Dixon for his time and energy in presenting the proposed policy over several months.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:15 p.m.