

JOURNAL OF THE FACULTY SENATE (Norman campus)  
The University of Oklahoma  
Special session - February 24, 1986, 3:30 p.m.  
Conoco Auditorium, Neustadt Wing, Bizzell Library

The special session of the Faculty Senate was called to order by Professor David Levy, Chair.

PRESENT: Baker, Brown, Caldwell, Carr, Christian, Cohen, Cozad, Curtis, Dietrich, Eliason, Frech, Friend, Harper, Hill, Hopkins, Horrell, Huseman, Kaid, Karriker, Knapp, Knehans, Kudrna, Kuriger, Larson, Levy, Lis, Livesey, Magrath, Marek, Mennig, Mills, Morgan, Murphy, O'Rear, Palmer, Parker, Peacock, Tepker, Tobias, Uno, Welpott, Whitely, Wiggins

Provost's office representative: Ray  
PSA representative: Burgeson  
GSA representative: Mork  
UOSA representatives: Conwell, Hickey, Poynor  
Liaison, AAUP: Turkington  
Liaison, Women's Caucus: Davis

ABSENT: Beesley, Canter, Economou, Eisenhart, Emanuel, Holmes, Poland, Reynolds, Taylor

PSA representatives: Hammond, McCarley  
Liaison, ABP: Butler

[Note: Absences from special meetings are not counted in the attendance records; however, attendance at this special meeting can be used to offset an absence from a regular meeting during the 1985-86 academic year.]

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At the February 10 Faculty Senate meeting the members of the Senate agreed to call this special session of the Senate to formulate a collective response to the President's instructions for meeting the budget crisis for 1986-87. The Executive Committee prepared ten recommendations for Senate consideration and action. (The original recommendation #1 mailed to the Senate was replaced by the following amended version distributed at the meeting.) The Chair invited anyone to speak on the recommendations, but asked that voting and motions be restricted to the members of the Senate. Each recommendation was considered individually, beginning with the introductory paragraph. The final version of the recommendations is listed on the last page.

In view of the financial crisis now facing the University of Oklahoma, the University faculty, speaking through the Faculty Senate, make the following recommendations:

Professor Murphy commented that it was presumptuous of the Faculty Senate to speak for the general faculty, considering there have been occasions when the views of the Senate and the faculty at large conflict. He recommended that the paragraph read "... Oklahoma, the Faculty Senate makes the following recommendations:" After some discussion on whether the Senate should speak on behalf of the faculty, Professor Baker moved to table the introduction until the results of the recommendations were known. The motion to table carried. Responding to Professor Lis' suggestion, Professor Levy agreed to report the votes for each question. The discussion turned to the first recommendation.

1. That if it appears that the academic side of the University is to suffer budget cuts, for 1986-87, in excess of 10%, the President of the University declare, at once, a state of financial emergency. Besides having the merit of stating what would actually be the case, such a declaration would set into operation the mechanisms for reviewing and deliberating possible cuts in both programs and personnel and open the possibility of treating our problems as long-range, and not merely as short-range ones.

Answering Professor Brown's question, Professor Levy read the description of "financial emergency:" "A state of financial emergency will be declared whenever the Educational and General Part I budget allocation to the agency necessitates reductions in faculty or staff, or reductions in operational budgets that would seriously erode program quality." He explained that the Executive Committee felt that cuts deeper than 10% on the academic side would be a mark of serious deterioration of program quality. Professor Frech urged that a second reason be added to the conditions for declaring a financial emergency: "if untenured faculty will have to be laid off. After a discussion as to whether the amendment should specify untenured and/or tenured faculty, Prof. Frech agreed to the suggestion that #1 read: "... 10%, or that it appears that faculty will have to be terminated, the President ..." Professor Cohen suggested adding "in order to meet the

budget emergency" after "terminated." Professor Frech agreed to the addition. The amendment, which added "or that it appears that faculty will have to be terminated in order to meet the budget emergency" carried. During discussion on the amended motion, Professor Levy explained the reasons why the Executive Committee favored a declaration of financial emergency: The University could depart from the "last hired, first fired" rule if it became necessary to terminate faculty, and it would put into operation an orderly review of program priorities with an eye to reallocation of resources. He also explained the reasons why he thought the administration was opposed to such a declaration: Tenure ought to be regarded as sacred for as long as possible, and word of the financial emergency would darken OU's reputation in recruiting new students and faculty. After a lengthy discussion concerning the possible duration of the downturn and the responsibility of the administration to maintain a sound budget and make decisions about discontinuance of programs, recommendation #1 as amended carried 25 to 15.

2. That for the year ahead the University meet the shortfall by a combination of base-reductions and one-year (non-base) reductions. Besides opening several additional options, the decision to take some of the cuts from non-base sources would give the University breathing time--in conjunction with the declaration of financial emergency--to consider necessary reallocations for the future.

Professor Levy explained that non-base reductions were temporary one-year reductions, e.g. one-year leaves. Associate Provost Ray explained that funds saved this year may be used to offset next year's cuts. Professor Kudrna's motion to strike "in conjunction with the declaration of financial emergency" carried. Professor Eliason suggested that temporary measures might provide more time to find strategies for optimizing cutbacks. Recommendation #2 as amended carried 39 to 0.

3. That it should be made clear that, as a general principle, budget cuts exacted from the academic side of the University should be less severe than those exacted from the non-academic side. Each reduction should be measured against the central missions of the University--teaching and research--and those closest to those missions should be accorded the most protection in carrying out their duties.

Recommendation #3 carried 39 to 0.

4. That if it should prove necessary to terminate personnel, such terminations should be made, wherever possible, from the non-academic rather than from the academic side of the University. Again, each termination should be measured against the teaching and research functions of the University, and, in general, those furthest removed from performing these central functions should be terminated first.

There was a clarification that the library and computer center would be considered academic. Recommendation #4 carried 40 to 0.

5. That if it should still be necessary to terminate personnel in the academic areas, non-teaching personnel should be terminated before those who perform teaching functions. Organized research groups which are engaged primarily in contracted research should be encouraged to fund themselves, as much as possible, from grants and contracts, and decrease sharply their dependence on state E & G support.

There was considerable discussion on the meaning of "academic areas" and on the essential role of certain non-teaching personnel. Professor Levy affirmed Professor Kudrna's assessment that the intent was to distinguish between teaching personnel and pure research personnel. Professor Cohen's amendment adding "wherever possible" between "terminated" and "before" carried. Answering a question on the library, Professor Howard explained that librarians have teaching functions. Recommendation #5 as amended carried 26 to 15.

6. That no increases in salary be given in the coming year.

Professor Levy explained that the Executive Committee was reluctant to present a list of recommendations that would hurt everyone but faculty members, that it was felt that it would cause ill feeling to give selective raises and that it would be unseemly to give some people raises while terminating others. Professor Hill moved to insert "general" between "no" and "increases"; he accepted Professor Brown's suggestion to substitute "except in unusual cases" at the end of the sentence. There was general agreement that across-the-board raises should not be given, but that departments may have to make some market adjustments or give raises to retain particular faculty members. Further, it might be more expensive to replace than retain an individual, and the administration might not even allow the unit to keep the position under the new budget process. Recommendation #6 as amended carried 29 to 9.

7. That no promotions, reassignments, and reclassifications be made that entail an increase in compensation.

Professor Tepker explained that the amendment to #6 made #7 unnecessary; he moved to delete #7. The argument was made against #7 on the grounds that it would be inequitable to make "dry" promotions; on the other hand, it was argued that some sacrifices should be made to preserve the teaching of courses, and that in the past raises in the administrative areas were justified by reclassifying positions. The motion to delete #7 carried.

8. That the University put into place immediately a program of attractive early retirement incentives.

There was a clarification that early retirement incentives would save the University money in the long run. Recommendation #8 carried 37 to 0.

9. That the University postpone, for at least one year, moving into the Energy Center Building and the new Music Building, thereby saving an estimated \$780,000 from the current budget.

Professor Cohen argued in favor of the recommendation, saying the University could not afford to move into the new buildings, and he would rather see the money go toward teaching salaries. Several faculty argued for moving into the new buildings because the move would provide badly needed space, and if the buildings were left empty, future donations might be harmed, it might be perceived that OU didn't need these buildings, the full \$780,000 might not really be saved, and it may harm the university's ability to correct any deficiencies in the buildings. Recommendation #9 failed (14 for and 17 against), thereby deleting it from the list.

10. That the University undertake at once three careful studies:

- a. A study to explore whether revenues from auxiliary services and University properties can, in some instances, be used for the educational programs of the University;
- b. A study to begin the process of drawing priorities in our programs;
- c. A study to determine what assets or special operations of the University can be sold or temporarily closed in order to help meet the present financial crisis.

Professor Karkiker suggested that #b and #c be reversed; Professor Levy agreed to do so if the recommendation passed. He pointed out that the priorities mentioned in #b would be on a campus-wide basis. Recommendation #10 carried 35 to 0.

Returning to the introduction, which was tabled, Professor Murphy reiterated his question as to whether the general faculty would agree with the Senate on all these issues. It was pointed out that there's no point in having a Faculty Senate if it did not speak for the faculty, but that it would be preferable to get the input of constituents ahead of time. The amendment to delete "the University faculty, speaking through" failed (17 for and 19 against); therefore the introduction will remain as is.

Final discussion centered on the instructions to departments to identify 15% cuts, even though it appeared that the overall reduction in the funding would be 10%. Associate Provost Ray explained that with the new budgeting system, the cuts would not be across-the-board, and that to cut some units by a smaller amount, it would be necessary to reduce other budgets by 15%.

[A transcription of the meeting is available to any interested faculty member in the Senate office.]

The meeting adjourned at 5:20 p.m.

  
Sonya Fallgatter  
Administrative Coordinator

  
Sherril Christian  
Secretary

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2. That for the year ahead the University meet the shortfall by a combination of base-reductions and one-year (non-base) reductions. Besides opening several additional options, the decision to take some of the cuts from non-base sources would give the University breathing time to consider necessary reallocations for the future. (39-0)
3. That it should be made clear that, as a general principle, budget cuts exacted from the academic side of the University should be less severe than those exacted from the non-academic side. Each reduction should be measured against the central missions of the University—teaching and research—and those closest to those missions should be accorded the most protection in carrying out their duties. (39-0)
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5. That if it should still be necessary to terminate personnel in the academic areas, non-teaching personnel should be terminated, wherever possible, before those who perform teaching functions. Organized research groups which are engaged primarily in contracted research should be encouraged to fund themselves, as much as possible, from grants and contracts, and decrease sharply their dependence on state E & G support. (26-15)
6. That no increases in salary be given in the coming year, except in unusual cases. (29-9)
7. That the University put into place immediately a program of attractive early retirement incentives. (37-0)
8. That the University undertake at once three careful studies: (35-0)
  - a. A study to explore whether revenues from auxiliary services and University properties can, in some instances, be used for the educational programs of the University;
  - b. A study to determine what assets or special operations of the University can be sold or temporarily closed in order to help meet the present financial crisis; and
  - c. A study to begin the process of drawing priorities in our programs.