

JOURNAL OF THE FACULTY SENATE
 The University of Oklahoma (Norman campus)
 Regular session - March 16, 1992 - 3:30 p.m.
 Conoco Auditorium (Neustadt Wing, Bizzell Library)

The Faculty Senate was called to order by Professor Jay C. Smith, Chair.

PRESENT: Barman, Bennett, Boyd, Carr, Christian, Cozad, Cross, Curtis, Dillon, Harper, Harris, Havener, Hill, Hilliard, Hinson, Hopkins, Jaffe, Kidd, Kuriger, Kutner, Latrobe, Livesey, London, Nelson, Norwood, Paolino, St. John, Schnell, J. Smith, P. Smith, Stanhouse, Striz, Sullivan, Swisher, Swoyer, Vehik, Vestal, Whitecotton, Willinger

PSA representative: Spencer

UOSA representative: Dietert

ABSENT: Breipohl, Cornelius, Fonteneau, Foote, Harm, Johnson, Kenderdine, Levy, O'Halloran, Schlegel, White, Whitmore, Zaman

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APPROVAL OF JOURNAL

The Senate Journal for the regular session of February 10, 1992, was approved.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The faculty awards luncheon is scheduled for Thursday, April 16, 1992, at 11:30 a.m. in the Union ballroom. Invitations will be sent to the faculty in the near future. A reception will be held after the luncheon in the second floor lobby of Jacobson Hall to celebrate the Faculty Senate's fiftieth anniversary and to dedicate the new Faculty Senate office (Jacobson Hall 206). Prof. Smith mentioned the extremely good cooperation the Senate has received in arranging for new quarters and the celebration, especially from outgoing OU Regents' Chair Sarah Hogan.

Prof. Walter Kelley (Mathematics) agreed to serve on an Ombudservice Advisory Committee that will look into whether to expand the ombudservice campus wide.

REMARKS BY DR. ROLAND SMITH, VICE PRESIDENT FOR STUDENT AFFAIRS

Dr. Smith said he had arrived September 1, and for the last six months his division has been engaged in a strategic planning process. The product is an action plan that takes the division to the year 2000 (available from the Senate office). Their mission statement is to recruit students from an increasingly heterogeneous population pool and to provide those students, once enrolled, with co-curricular programs, activities, and services 1) that strengthen the educational environment for learning, 2) that help students develop fully their talents and abilities as well as achieve their educational goals and objectives, and 3) that enhance the sense of community and the overall quality of campus life.

Four sets of goals have been identified: undergraduate recruitment, retention and graduation, campus life and environment, and student growth and development. Dr. Smith noted that the University expects to stabilize undergraduate enrollment at 15,000 but increase graduate enrollment. He said the ombudservice is a project that should make the campus environment more friendly. It is a problem-solving network that uses the existing administrative structure to help students and others get their problems resolved more efficiently and quickly. He believes that can be accomplished by training people in what goes on outside their department. He hopes to have it in place next fall.

Prof. Hopkins asked about the item under campus life and environmental goals, "Build a new University Center or Union located near the center of campus." Dr. Smith said that proposed action was written before the University became interested in taking control of the Union. He added that if the present Union does not become a truly functional Union, then the University should consider building a new one. His hope is that a reorganization of the Union can bring all the student organizations together for better interaction.

Student Affairs has been re-organized into four areas: student services, campus services, recruitment services, and professional services. By pulling together units and activities that were scattered, Dr. Smith hopes to get better coordination. For example, a strategic plan for recruitment is being developed. Prof. Kidd asked which area would be responsible for wellness and what actions were identified to promote wellness. Dr. Smith answered that wellness is a cooperative effort by the professional services area and Huston Huffman. Currently they are developing programs that relate to wellness and health education.

Prof. Hopkins commented that the retention and graduation rates seem very optimistic. She asked how the rates compare to peer institutions. Dr. Smith replied that OU's rates are lower, due, in part to its large commuter population which tends to lower the rates. He explained that the goals were set by the Enrollment Management Board, and it is up to Student Affairs to see that they are achieved.

Prof. Hill asked whether the goals were prioritized. Dr. Smith said they are prioritized in that the original goals were pared down to four. He believes all of the goals are reasonable and achievable. Prof. Hill asked what the Faculty Senate can do to assist. Dr. Smith said he welcomes comments on changes that should be made since strategic planning is a continuous process. Some specific activities that can use faculty support are the mentorship program for new students and a multi-media learning lab in Couch.

Prof. Havener observed that the primary focus of the goals is undergraduate, yet the plans call for one-quarter of the student population to be graduate students. He asked how Student Affairs interacts with graduate students. Dr. Smith said he hopes for significant graduate student involvement. Some mechanisms are already in place such as the Graduate Student Senate. Student Affairs is prepared to work with colleges and departments to strengthen programs. Prof. Havener noted that certain areas, such as child care, will be very important to graduate students.

Prof. Carr commented that the proposed ombudservice will lead to time-consuming activities, such as assessment, and will represent a cost in terms of faculty time and productivity. He noted that more administrative support will be needed. Dr. Smith said the ombudservice should not significantly increase anyone's burden because it uses people within the University, and students will be referred to the proper place.

Prof. Cozad asked about the future of Goddard Health Center. Dr. Smith responded that there have been a number of studies of Goddard. He would like to see Goddard provide primary health care for the campus in the most efficient, cost-effective manner possible. Currently, Goddard loses money, especially in the after-hours clinic. The after-hours clinic is open until 11 p.m. and loses about \$250,000 a year. In addition, Goddard is consuming too large a portion of the student activity fee, according to Dr. Smith. Prof. Cozad asked what part would be scaled back. Prof. Smith answered that a committee is looking at the level of service to provide, so he does not want to get too far out ahead of that recommendation. Prof. Cozad asked whether the Faculty Senate would be asked for input. Dr. Smith said there is faculty representation on the committee.

Prof. Hilliard asked how the division proposes to fill the dorms by next year. Dr. Smith said the occupancy rate has been pretty good--over 80%. The plan is to make it more attractive for students to stay in the residence halls by renovating the halls to meet the expectations of students.

Prof. Vehik asked why the retention rates in the "other" category are low. Dr. Paul Bell, Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education and Programs, said those are students who transfer in with greater than 24 hours and less than 30 hours and a 2.0 g.p.a. They are not as well prepared.

FACULTY SENATE CHAIR'S REPORT, by Prof. Jay Smith

"This month there are two items which may be of interest to the members of the Senate:

Item Number One

"Your chair is a member of the Faculty Advisory Committee to the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education. The FAC is a group set up by Chancellor Hans Brisch to provide faculty thinking for the State Regents' staff on issues of higher education. The seven members of the FAC are two each from the tiers of higher education in the state, two-year colleges, four-year colleges and universities, the comprehensive universities and one member representing the private colleges and universities of the State.

"Last Thursday, the FAC attended the hearing held by the Regents on the proposed increase of tuition for State institutions. The FAC had voted earlier to support the proposed 4% average tuition increase. That increase recommendation is clearly below what is needed to maintain the Regents' multi-year plan to bring the State into mid-range of tuition costs with our peer institutions. The FAC was the only voice at the hearing speaking for a tuition increase.

"I fear that is the kind of year we are facing. Last week I also walked the halls of the State Capitol and experienced what I can only describe as "gloom and doom". The State Question 640 vote was clearly on the minds of the legislators and their staffs. What I heard about the prospects for higher education funding ranged from "you must be kidding" about an increase to "well you can take your place in a very long line." When discussing the need to maintain at least some progress toward our goal of raising the funding of Oklahoma higher education to above the level of .65 of peer institutions, I was told by one senator (who is generally supportive of higher education), that "those people (meaning those at the peer institutions) don't vote in my district." Even our best friends--meaning the Cleveland County delegation--are making statements opposed to an increase in tuition. (Indeed, I found not one person at the State Capitol who was hopeful about or even publicly supporting a tuition increase.)

"Tuition, of course, is only one part of the funding package--a small part at that. The outlook for increased appropriations for higher education is equally bleak. There is even talk of removing one-time only monies from the appropriation, whereas three weeks ago in the same hallways, I heard talk of annualizing those funds and more on top of that. Three weeks ago I was told that a State capital improvement bond issue for higher education was almost certainly going to happen. Last week, I was told by the same people that all of that was now having to be reconsidered.

"I know I visited the Capitol on a bad week and I have reason to hope, because of some things said by some people, that all may not be lost. However, I am reminded of the words of the Japanese philosopher Saito who said, "that even if the message is not received does not mean that it is not worth sending." I believe we as faculty can better tell our own story, our own needs, our own concerns for our institution, and, most important, our fears for the welfare of our students, than can any other group speaking for us. I believe it is time for faculty to become proactive. I think we need to be heard. Tuition is only one small part of a funding package, a package that needs to be viewed as a package and as critical to the future of the State. A place to start is with our own Cleveland County delegation (where we do vote), and then to delegations from all districts, as we do represent the University of Oklahoma (not the University of Norman and Oklahoma City), and we do have students from all of Oklahoma. I encourage you to speak out. I hope you will, and all faculty will, do something. If we do nothing, then we can expect nothing, accept nothing and we really have no right to bitch about nothing happening.

Item Number Two

"The Executive Committee met with all of the candidates brought to campus as part of the Provost search process. We, as faculty, I believe, owe an expression of gratitude to the members of the Provost Search Committee for the time and work they have put into the search. I understand a report and recommendation has gone to the President.

"Both from our interview with the candidates and, during the time of the candidates on campus, from numerous members of the faculty, it became obvious that one issue which was of paramount concern was the future relationship of the Provost with the Vice President for Research and the future role of the Vice President for Research. We asked the President about that issue. We heard some answers, and we believe that the President needs a wider forum for his answers. President Van Horn has agreed (indeed, volunteered) to attend the April meeting of the Faculty Senate. I think in April that more will also be known about higher education funding and about the Provost Search. I hope the April session with the President will be mostly questions and answers. I also hope you will do some homework between now and then and find out from your faculty colleagues their concerns and their questions and that you will come prepared with those concerns and questions."

ELECTION, COUNCILS/COMMITTEES/BOARDS

Prof. Vehik explained that three student appeals committees had been collapsed into the Faculty Appeals Board, and some untenured faculty were added to hear those student appeals. However, because of a legal technicality, the untenured faculty would now have to be replaced by tenured faculty. The Senate approved the following Senate Committee on Committees' nominations for the Faculty Appeals Board:

1990-94 term of Patricia First: Stephen Thompson (Anthropology)
 1991-95 term of Richard Cifelli: Marvin Baker (Geography)
 1991-95 term of Deborah Leslie: Robert Bursik (Sociology)
 1991-95 term of John Lovett: Marjory Cornelius (Music)
 1991-95 term of Ana Rueda-Jenkins: Herman Curiel (Social Work)
 1991-95 term of Michael Scaperlanda: Michelle Hanna (Botany/Microbiol.)
 1991-95 term of Mary Scott: Marilyn Ogilvie (University Libraries)
 1991-95 term of Kenneth Stephenson: Edward Sankowski (Philosophy)
 1991-95 term of William Tabb: Jan Seifert (University Libraries)
 1991-95 term of Gerard Walschap: Laurie Vitt (Zoology)

Prof. Smith explained that the committee restructuring of last year resulted in some committees being collapsed and others having reduced numbers. As expected, there have been some problems. He asked the Senators to let the Faculty Senate office know if there are any committees where the restructuring is not working.

RETIREMENT ISSUES

(For background information see 11/91 Journal, page 7; 12/91 Journal, page 6; 1/92 Journal, page 4; and 2/92 Journal, page 7).

Prof. Trent Gabert, Chair of the Senate's Faculty Welfare Committee, said he had intended to make a recommendation to lower the TIAA/CREF age threshold from 30 to 27 and have a vesting period of three years. However, it turns out there are 63 faculty younger than 30, and that will involve a significant amount of money. Therefore, he would like to wait for additional information from other institutions and for feedback from the Faculty Senate as to whether or not there should be a vesting period. It is likely that he will have a recommendation in April.

STUDENT CONGRESS RESOLUTION RECOMMENDING A FALL BREAK

(For background information see 2/92 Senate Journal, page 8.) Ms. Mendi Sossamon, UOSA President, and Dr. Paul Bell, Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education and Programs, were present to answer questions about the student resolution for a two-day Fall Break (Appendix I).

Prof. Striz said a question that was raised at the last meeting was whether the extra day's holiday would meet the legal requirements. Dr. Bell distributed a one-page document outlining the State Regents' calendar requirements and the scheduled holidays at OU and OSU. The semester must contain 16 weeks with 80 days of instruction and examination. A course must meet 16 fifty-minute periods or 800 clock minutes of instruction for each credit hour; the lab portion of classes must meet 100 minutes. OU counts help day and finals week as part of the 80 day total. By scheduling seventeen weeks, one week is left over for holidays. The current fall holidays are Labor Day (Monday) and the three days of Thanksgiving (Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday); that leaves a Tuesday available for a holiday. The spring holidays are the five days of Spring Break. OSU has a week for Spring Break, but their fall holidays are: Labor Day/Winter Break (Monday), Winter Break (Tuesday), Monday classes (Wednesday), and Thanksgiving (Thursday and Friday). Dr. Bell pointed out that the OU-Texas football game holiday is not an official holiday. It is a technical violation of Regents' requirements. Any additional days for holidays are supposed to be made up.

Prof. Boyd commented that there is no space for a holiday in the fall. Dr. Bell said Tuesday could be taken as a holiday in the Fall. Prof. Striz said OU could have a schedule like OSU whereby classes are rescheduled to make up for the missed day.

Prof. Havener said one of the unanswered questions from the last meeting was whether this proposal would affect graduate classes, classes that meet once a week, and Wednesday night classes. Dr. Bell said a regularly scheduled holiday affects all classes equally. He added, "Texas is not a regularly scheduled approved holiday, so you can make up your own rule regarding how classes are released." The law school and Health Sciences Center have their own calendars.

Prof. Dillon asked whether extra days would have to be added at the beginning of the semester if the Senate approved these two proposed days. Dr. Bell answered that if the holiday fell on any other day but Tuesday, then any class that meets only on that holiday will be deficient. Prof. Striz said a lot of faculty are concerned about missing classes on the wrong day.

Ms. Sossamon said the students had a new proposal that might address a lot of the problems: begin the fall semester on a Thursday so that a Thursday and Friday could be taken off for the OU-Texas holiday. Traditionally, faculty are here the week before classes--faculty appointments cover that period--and students would be willing to come back earlier to be able to have the Fall Break. Furthermore, it would solve the problems about night classes and classes that meet once a week, and it would fulfill the Regents' requirements. Ms. Sossamon believes the rescheduling option in place at OSU would be a logistical nightmare.

Prof. Hilliard suggested that Labor Day be dropped and then the Texas holiday be scheduled on a Monday and Tuesday. Ms. Sossamon answered that Labor Day it is a traditional holiday, and she thinks the students would not want to give it up.

Prof. Norwood said he was astonished that the faculty would consider any holiday that revolves around a football game. He said the Athletic Department has disgraced this University and has helped to lower the University nationally. The holiday would send the message that academics are a low priority and would damage the reputation of the Faculty Senate in the eyes of the faculty. Prof. Hilliard said he believes it would be difficult to get the students to start class on a Thursday. He said he did not object to the concept of a Fall Break because the holiday is a tradition. Prof. Norwood said he believes it does send the wrong message. He noted that the Faculty Senate had never gone on record supporting Martin Luther King Day, and it is a disgrace that the University refuses to celebrate that day.

Prof. Hopkins pointed out that starting on a Thursday or Friday would not alleviate the problem of classes that meet once a week. Prof. Dillon asked whether Wednesday night classes would meet if a Thursday and Friday Fall Break is approved. Dr. Bell said they would.

Prof. Harris reminded the group that the University has a research mission. During the summer many faculty have to travel to do research, and starting classes earlier would cut that short. Prof. Kuriger explained that a Thursday and Friday holiday eliminates a whole week of curriculum for classes that meet once a week. Prof. Paolino said he wondered how many students are really in favor of this since 140 drama students were overwhelmingly against the proposal. Ms. Sossamon replied that the majority of students do favor a break.

There was some discussion about the relationship of Ms. Sossamon's suggestion to begin the semester on Thursday to the original proposal for a Fall Break and whether the Senate was merely voting on the concept of a Fall Break. Prof. Hill pointed out that the original proposal specifies a break on a Thursday and Friday before the second weekend of October. Prof. Hilliard asked whether an amendment could be proposed to eliminate Labor Day. Dr. Bell explained that Labor Day is not just an institutional holiday and is a holiday for faculty and staff as well as students. He said he did not know the legal implications.

Prof. Kutner noted that under Paul Bell's interpretation of what a University holiday is, professional units would have trouble meeting the calendar requirements. Prof. Livesey asked about the student sentiment regarding OSU's approach. Ms. Sossamon said she believes it would be easier to start the semester earlier; however, the students are willing to compromise.

Prof. Curtis suggested that the problem exists because the students want two days as opposed to one. He said he would like to see a one-day holiday on Friday to allow students to drive to Texas safely, and then schedule Friday classes on Tuesday. Prof. Striz commented that he would be opposed to the part of the OSU model which eliminates the Wednesday holiday before Thanksgiving.


Prof. Vehik proposed an amendment to have a one-day holiday on Friday and hold Friday classes on Tuesday (i.e. pretend Tuesday is Friday). Prof. Smith pointed out that, with the amendment, the students would not be getting anything they did not already have. Prof. Hill commented that the Faculty Senate has always been opposed to an official Texas holiday. With this amendment it would look as though the Senate has approved an official Texas holiday. Prof. Schnell suggested that the Senate vote up or down on the original motion. Prof. Christian agreed, saying he said he did not know how the Senate could do anything but vote no on the proposal because legally the University cannot have two days. Prof. Cozad remarked, "I think that what we really found out is how well off we are with what we have."

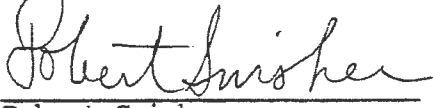
There was some further discussion as to whether the original motion should include the suggestion to start classes earlier. Ms. Sossamon said the students would be willing to drop Section 1 of the original student resolution, form a committee to work out the details, and bring it back for approval.

The amendment failed on a voice vote. Prof. Schnell urged the Senate to vote on the original resolution brought to the Senate and send a clear message. The original resolution failed on a voice vote.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 5:02 p.m. The next regular session of the Senate will be held at 3:30 p.m. on Monday, April 13, 1992, in the Conoco Auditorium.


 Sonya Fallgatter
 Administrative Coordinator


 Robert Swisher
 Secretary

Norman Campus Faculty Senate
 Oklahoma Memorial Union, Room 406
 325-6789
 WA0236@uokmvsu.bitnet



The
University of Oklahoma

OFFICE OF THE
STUDENT PRESIDENT
633 Elm
Norman, Oklahoma 73019-0350
(405) 325-6471

December 5, 1991

Dr. Richard Van Horn
President University of Oklahoma
Evans Hall

Dear President Van Horn,

The UOSA Student Congress wholeheartedly supports the creation of a fall break. We would like for this fall break to consist of the Thursday and Friday before the second weekend in October.

Both Oklahoma State University and the University of Central Oklahoma have fall breaks this particular weekend. Traditionally students at OU have had the Monday after the OU-Texas weekend off; however, many professors complain that attendance is quite low on the Friday before the weekend as well. This disrupts the Monday, Wednesday, Friday sequence class; therefore, Student Congress thinks this problem could be solved by making this holiday a Thursday Friday holiday. The university calendar and faculty will also be helped: by establishing an official fall break in place of the yearly OU-Texas day, students, faculty, and the administration could plan around the holiday.

This is a very important issue to both students and faculty. I feel that Student Congress has proposed a solution that will be pleasing to students and faculty alike. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Victoria L. Allred

VLA/cb

STUDENT CONGRESS
UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA STUDENT ASSOCIATION
CONGRESSIONAL SESSION XLVI OCTOBER 22, 1991

CONGRESSIONAL BILL NO.

Title: A RESOLUTION ENCOURAGING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A FALL BREAK AT THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA.

Whereas: Oklahoma State University and the University of Central Oklahoma (formerly known as Central State University) have a fall break as a two-day holiday; and,

Whereas: OSU and UCO have recently adhered to the same schedule as the University of Oklahoma. This gives state schools a uniform schedule of Class beginnings and endings; and,

Whereas: Unlike OSU and UCO, the University of Oklahoma does not have a Fall Break; and,

Whereas: The University of Oklahoma has a re-occurring problem with scheduling a holiday for OU/Texas weekend; and,

Whereas: The holiday was moved to Friday and many students also chose to miss Thursday from their classes; and,

Whereas: Students have clearly shown they want a two-day holiday for OU/Texas weekend. Many students take it even if it isn't given to them; and,

Whereas: OSU and UCO have their fall breaks in October; and,

Whereas: Scheduling a fall break to fall on a Thursday and Friday would be better than a Friday and Monday because most Monday and Friday classes are the same; and,

Whereas: The regent's standards regarding academic calendars state that "All classes are expected to meet for the full 16 weeks."; and,

Whereas: The University of Oklahoma's calendar schedules classes to meet for 17 weeks allowing extra time that can be used for Holidays; and,

LET IT THEREFORE BE RESOLVED THAT:

Section 1: The University of Oklahoma Student Association strongly encourages the University of Oklahoma to adopt a Fall Break to fall on the Thursday and Friday before the second weekend of October.

Section 2: The University of Oklahoma Student Association recommends the Fall Break be implemented for the 1992-1993 school year.