

Note: Please get agenda items for the May 7 Senate meeting to Bege Bowers, English Department, by noon on Thursday, April 24.

ACADEMIC SENATE MINUTES
April 2, 1997

CALL TO ORDER:

Jim Morrison, chair of the Academic Senate, called the meeting to order.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING:

Lowell Satre moved that minutes of the 5 March 1997 meeting be approved. The motion was seconded, and minutes were approved as distributed.

CHARTER & BYLAWS COMMITTEE: No report.

SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

J. Morrison made the following announcements:

- The Senate Executive Committee will meet soon to fill positions created by resignations from this year's Senate committees and to appoint people to committees for next year. The Senate Executive Committee will ask current chairs of standing committees to provide feedback concerning attendance at meetings this year.
- The Senate Executive Committee has received a preliminary report on the closing of Lincoln Avenue and will review the report before taking further action on that issue.

FACULTY ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO THE CHANCELLOR: Duane Rost reported on the last FAC meeting and showed a video created by the Regents—see Appendix A. The video focused on changes in higher education today; ways technology is changing education; effects of these changes on higher education in Ohio; funding for higher education; and the Ohio master plan.

REPORT ON NORTH CENTRAL REACCREDITATION SELF-STUDY, ASS'T PROVOST JANICE ELIAS:

Janice Elias reported: Thank you for giving me the opportunity to report on the North Central reaccreditation self-study process, which will culminate in May 1998 with a site visit. For our student members and those of you relatively new to higher education, let me explain that there are two types of accreditation: institutional and specialized. Specialized accreditation is for a particular professional field such as education, business, or engineering. The North Central Association of Colleges and Schools is one of six regional accrediting bodies in the United States that accredit institutions as a whole. Accreditation by the regional association is absolutely essential for an institution of higher learning.

Many of you were at YSU at the time of our last visit in 1987, and some of you were here in 1977. You may have noticed that the current self-study is not “déjà vu all over again.” More attention is being given to this particular self-study than in the past, and more people are involved. Why?

In the rest of the world, government ministries set standards and inspect universities. Voluntary accreditation through a system of peer review is uniquely American. It is one of the important forces that has created a higher education system that attracts students from all over the world. Recently, however, America's colleges and universities have been under more scrutiny. There are increasing calls for accountability, and there is skepticism among legislators about whether we can regulate ourselves. When the Higher Education Act was reauthorized in 1992, there was a movement to establish much more federal government oversight of higher education. It was a wake-up call to the accrediting agencies.

To preserve peer review accreditation, in which the higher education community establishes its own standards, the system must be perceived by the public as credible and rigorous. Since our last visit, North Central has made major policy changes, adopted a new mission statement, and revised the evaluation criteria.

I want to tell you about those criteria and how each of you can help us meet them and can participate in the self-study. First let me describe the self-study process. The first step of our self-study was to identify the objectives. We are expected to have purposes in addition to meeting the criteria, purposes which lead to institutional improvement. Our purposes include requesting approval to offer degree programs at additional sites, evaluating progress toward the goals of *YSU 2000*, identifying strengths and areas for improvement that can help us plan for the next century, and involving all sectors of the University community in productive dialogue about substantive institutional issues.

To involve all sectors of the University in this process, we have 80 some people on ten different committees. Each of those committees has representatives on a steering committee. Committee members include students, alumni, faculty, staff, and administrators from all divisions of the University. All of the members of the Senate Academic Planning Committee are involved.

Each committee is responsible for one aspect of the self-study. There is one committee for each of North Central's five evaluation criteria, one committee for a section about federal compliance, another that is responsible for the exhibits we must prepare, and another that must describe how we have responded to the concerns expressed by the last visiting team. Based on the work of these eight committees, the steering committee will summarize the strengths and concerns and recommend a plan of action for institutional improvement.

Committees have been collecting data and now are preparing first drafts of their sections. These will be circulated for feedback to the steering committee and other individuals that the committees feel would be helpful. Committees will revise the drafts and submit them this summer to the editor, Bege Bowers. Bege will prepare a draft that will be widely circulated at the beginning of fall quarter. Everyone at the University will have an opportunity to comment. These comments will be considered by the steering committee in preparing the final document, and they will be retained as part of the exhibits. I urge you to take advantage of this opportunity to help shape the document.

In addition to working together to create the printed document, we also need to work together to create the reality, an institution that does indeed meet the criteria. For each criterion, the Commission will look for patterns of evidence. Your individual efforts help create that pattern.

The first criterion states, "The institution has clear and publicly stated purposes consistent with its mission and appropriate to an institution of higher education." You can contribute to that criterion by participating in revision of mission statements for your respective units.

The second criterion states, "The institution has effectively organized the human, financial, and physical resources necessary to accomplish its purposes." One example of evidence for that is functioning governance documents in academic departments.

The third criterion states, "The institution is accomplishing its educational and other purposes." Some examples of the pattern of evidence for that criterion are educational outcomes assessment plans, a system of program review, and course syllabi that indicate that the curriculum is clearly defined, coherent, and intellectually rigorous.

Criterion four states, "The institution can continue to accomplish its purposes and strengthen its educational effectiveness." This criterion refers to ongoing planning processes and includes such things as technology plans, annual reports, mission revision, annual divisional priorities, and the goal-setting of individual faculty.

The last criterion states, "The institution demonstrates integrity in its practices and relationships." One of the ways we are doing that is by developing an institutional ethics statement, which this body will be reviewing in the coming months. The criterion also refers to making sure that our actions are consistent with our words--that is, for example, if a course is listed in our catalog, we actually do offer it on a fairly consistent basis.

You have been asked to do many things in the past three years: assessment plans, program review, mission statements, governance documents. Sometimes we get tired and wonder whether these efforts are really worthwhile. Forgive the cliché, but it is difficult to see the forest when we are so busy looking at the individual trees. But these components are all part of a systemic change that is moving Youngstown State University to a new level. I like to think that institutions, just as people do, seek self-actualization. We have not yet realized our potential. I know that the team that visits us in 1998 will recognize the quality that is here and commend our efforts. Thank you for all you have done and for what you will do in the next year to make that possible.

If you have any questions about the process or the criteria, I would be happy to respond.

ELECTIONS & BALLOTING COMMITTEE: Jim Morrison reported that the committee is setting up elections for next year.

ACADEMIC STANDARDS COMMITTEE: No report.

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS COMMITTEE: Program proposals were appended to the Senate agenda, pp. 2-60. No action is required.

CURRICULUM COMMITTEE: Curriculum information was appended to the Senate agenda; no action is required.

ACADEMIC PLANNING, INTEGRATED TECHNOLOGIES, UNIVERSITY OUTREACH, LIBRARY, ACADEMIC RESEARCH, STUDENT ACADEMIC AFFAIRS, STUDENT ACADEMIC GRIEVANCE, HONORS, AND ACADEMIC EVENTS COMMITTEES: No reports. The Senate Executive Committee will consider suggestions the Honors Committee has proposed.

GER COMMITTEE: Bill Jenkins noted that the GER Committee will get the projected model out to deans and the Deans' Advisory Councils within the next month. The GER will meet with the deans and the DACs to solicit feedback. The committee will also hold open hearings for faculty, staff,

administrators, and students. Jenkins will meet with Student Government to discuss the model. Jenkins invited questions.

F. Barger asked about issues pending at the time of Jenkins's report to the Senate last month (orientation course, speech course, GER oversight). Jenkins noted that these are still pending. The GER Committee feels there should be a coordinator and a faculty advisory committee. The faculty advisory committee must be linked somehow with the University Curriculum Committee and with the Academic Senate's process of approval. The GER Committee should have a recommendation for the Senate in June. Barger expressed concern that June may be too soon, given the need for feedback.

Someone else asked for clarification on the "human expression" and "human institutions" categories. Jenkins noted that human expression courses meet Goal 8; they are courses in the artistic or literary realm (corresponding to the current humanities area). Human institutions courses involve what might traditionally be called the social studies area. Psychology courses might fit any number of places in the model. Jenkins encouraged departments to look at the GER report in the last Senate minutes.

AD HOC COMMITTEE ON INSTITUTIONAL ETHICS:

Cynthia Brincat reported that the committee has met three times and reviewed proposals from professional organizations and other universities. Subcommittees have worked on statements, which the committee has reviewed to formulate a general statement. Each member of the committee is seeking outside review. The committee hopes to have a draft for the Senate to review on the May agenda.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS: None.

ADJOURNMENT: J. Morrison adjourned the meeting.

Appendix A

Faculty Advisory Committee to the Chancellor, OBOR

Meeting: March 7, 1997, and Related Actions

Duane Rost

Youngstown State University was honored to have the Ohio Board of Regents hold their March meetings on campus. There were a number of supporting meetings during the two days they were here. These days were a wonderful opportunity to show-case the University. It was an excellent period for YSU. The Regents expressed their thanks and appreciation in much more than merely diplomatic terms. The official Board meeting was March 14, 1997, in the Trustees Meeting Room, Tod Hall. During the Meeting President Cochran discussed the Mission, Goals and Future of YSU. This presentation seemed to be well received.

Chancellor Hairston has announced her intention to retire. She expects to leave the position some time during the fall and certainly by December 31. We will miss her leadership. Though her shoes are not physically large, they will be difficult to fill.

The Faculty Advisory Committee met on March 7, 1997. Rather than address that meeting in detail, I would like to take this opportunity to show a video presentation created by the Regents. It was first used as the introduction for presentations to the Legislature committees in support of the budget requests in February. Though some of it will seem like preaching to the choir here, the overall message continues to be very important.