Minutes, December 7, 2010

Roll: [Absentees Underlined] President Kendall Baker, Dr. David Crago, Dr. Robert Ruble, Mr. Thomas Stevick, Dean Karen Condeni, Ms. Adriane Thompson-Bradshaw, Dean Catherine Albrecht, Dean Eric Baumgartner, Dean Jon Sprague, Dean James Fenton, Rev. Vernon LaSala, Dr. Jeffery Allison, Dr. Khalid Al-Olimat, Dr. Nathaniel Bird, Dr. Bob Carrothers, Dr. Keith Durkin, Mr. Michael Hamper, Dr. Kevin Hill, Dr. Brian Keas, Prof. Laurie Laird, Dr. Michael Milks, Prof. Sue Montenery, Prof. Traci Moritz, Mr. Clyde Pickett, Dr. Harold Putt, Dr. Lisa Robeson, Dr. Sandra Schroeder, Dr. David Smith, Dr. Amy Stockert, Dr. Bryan Ward, Dr. Rob Waters, Dr. Dexter Woods, Dr. Kay Zekany

Dr. Lisa Robeson, Chair of Council, called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

I. Minutes of the November 2, 2010 meeting were approved as distributed (Motion by Michael Hamper, second by Bob Carrothers, motion carried.)

II. Reports from Constitutional Committees:
   a. Budget & Appropriations: Met on November 1 and will meet again next week.
   b. Academic Affairs: Have an item under New Business.
   c. Student Activities: See agenda, no further report.
   d. Personnel: Have an item under New Business.

III. Reports from Operational Committees:
   a. Athletics: No report.
   b. Information Technology: No report.
   c. Cultural & Special Events: See agenda, no further report.
   d. International Affairs: Met on November 4 to discuss initiatives for International students. There are 125 International students on campus.
   e. Religious Affairs: Will meet on December 10.
   f. General Education: The committee is actively reviewing tag requests. Faculty are requested to please keep sending their classes to be tagged!

IV. Planning Council: The committee met on December 6.

V. Other Reports:
   a. James Fenton reported that their graduate program in accounting is going through the Ohio Board of Regents approval process. They received a provisional authorization and are waiting on final approval by Chancellor Fingerhut. Once approval is received, the approval and proposal will be forwarded to the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). The HLC process will take a minimum of 60 days. The college is planning to begin delivering the program in Fall 2011. The college is currently performing three faculty searches in Economics, Finance and Accounting. They should be complete by January. The college, in conjunction with alumni (including seven advisory board members) has hosted three student/employer networking events in Cincinnati, Troy-Dayton and Columbus. Over 85 students and 50 employers have been engaged in the three events. Thirty-five high
school students from NW Ohio who attended a HOBY event this past summer were on campus last weekend for a reunion.

b. David Crago reported that students in the College of Law are taking final exams this week.

c. Catherine Albrecht reported that the department of history is hosting the sixth speaker in the Social Studies Colloquium on December 8. Dr. Zoladz will discuss the role that stress plays in hindering retention and recall of information. On December 9, the Phi Beta Delta International Forum is sponsoring a panel of ONU students who are military veterans that served in Iraq and Afghanistan with multiple deployments in the years before coming to ONU.

d. Student Senate: Michael Hamper reported that the recycling project has made significant progress by partnering with Residence Life and ONU Recycles. Twenty-five recycling bins should be distributed to academic buildings in January. Senate will complete the revision to Articles 1-6 of their by-laws at tomorrow’s meeting. Articles 7-12 of the by-laws will not be revised until after revisions are made to the constitution. The revised constitution will be voted on during the general election at the end of January. The coffee house with President Baker went very well. There were about 30 students in attendance and discussion focused on the proposed student center. There have been four resignations from the cabinet with three of them being filled already. Academic Affairs was not yet filled and VP Marsha McMunn will fill in until a replacement is found. Senate will host a student leadership conference on April 30. Doug Cureton, of Creativiteam, will be the speaker. Leader’s council is considering partnering with senate for the event which will be open to the campus community.

e. Health Services Advisory Committee: No report.

VI. Announcements: None.

VII. Questions for the President: John Lomax asked what the board of trustees had to say about our budgetary issues. President Baker stated he would be making a presentation about the budget at the December 14 faculty meeting and, additionally, at open forums next week. He encouraged all to attend.

VIII. Unfinished Business:

a. None.

IX. New Business:

a. Kay Zekany, chair of the Personnel Committee, presented proposed changes in the personnel-related portions of the Faculty Handbook. Discussion followed.

i. Catherine Albrecht asked if section 4.1.6 could be modified to read “(4 courses per year)” instead of “(3 courses per year).” Kay replied that the committee would consider.

ii. Brian Keas asked if the changes in section 4.1.1A are applicable to part-time and adjunct faculty. Kay replied yes. Brian suggested this might need clarification.

iii. Brian Keas asked about the last paragraph in section 2.13.5 which states “In addition, past practices are followed with respect to duties assigned....” What does the term “past practices” mean and can it be clarified? Kay responded that the committee had not edited this statement because they didn’t want to disturb the intent of the paragraph, they just wanted to update for semester
conversion. Kay asked if the committee should review the wording. Brian stated he would like the committee to review it. Kay said yes they would.

iv. Harold Putt asked about the conversion of credit hours in 4.1.1 where “27 quarter credit hours” has been converted to “24 semester credit hours.” Shouldn’t 27 quarter hours equal 18 semester hours? Kay said the committee had not done a straight conversion; they had polled the deans about what this value should be and received responses in the range of 18-27 semester hours so the committee compromised at 24.

b. John Lomax, chair of the Academic Affairs Committee, presented four motions from academic affairs for discussion. They include a revision to the 2012-13 calendar (changing the start dates for fall and spring semesters); the 2011-12 proposed final exam schedule/rules; revisions to the faculty handbook and a motion to modify the definition of a minor. Discussion occurred about motion #3, final exam schedule.

i. Brian Keas asked for rationale for changing Section 3.18.8 of the faculty handbook which currently states “A student with four (4) final examinations scheduled on one day may seek relief through the Registrar’s Office” to read “three (3) examinations.” John Lomax responded that there is data available that suggests that a student’s ability to do well on exams is impaired when they have 3 or more exams in one day so the committee felt this change would be beneficial to students. The registrar researched the policies at other universities across the US and the uniform practice is to allow students relief if students have 3 exams in one day. Note: the rule is not prescriptive but an option. Students MAY get relief if they ASK for it (same as our current practice). The registrar believes with the new final exam schedule, a small number of students would have 3+ exams in one day. Additionally, students taking a common exam would not be allowed to reschedule the common exam.

ii. Brian Keas noted that it seems like the faculty member is left out of the loop by stating that the student is to seek relief through the Registrar’s Office. Where is the faculty input? John Lomax responded that the committee could provide veto power to the faculty member but the committee felt it unnecessary. The idea here is to accommodate student needs. Currently, when a student requests relief through the Registrar’s Office, the registrar gathers information from the student and then consults with the faculty members involved to come to an acceptable solution before providing that solution to the student.

iii. Michael Milks suggested that a friendly amendment could be made to the last sentence so it would read something like: “The Registrar’s Office shall consult with the faculty members involved and then reschedule the appropriate exams to ensure...” instead of just saying “The Registrar’s Office shall reschedule....”

iv. Keith Durkin asked about the Final Exam Committee. Wouldn’t rescheduling of exams be the responsibility of that committee? Julie Hurtig commented that the college deans sit on the Final Exam Committee and their responsibilities do not include rescheduling of individual student exams. They might handle a request from a college or a department to move a specific course’s final exam but not a student’s exam.
v. Sue Montenery asked about the timing for a student’s request (i.e. could a student go to the Registrar’s Office on the Tuesday of exam week and ask for relief for the next day?) John Lomax said the committee would consider the addition of a rule regarding timing of the student’s request.

vi. Catherine Albrecht said she felt that it seemed likely (rather than unlikely) that students would have 3+ exams in one day since students will take more classes each term. John Lomax again reported that the registrar believes that fewer students would be affected but he would check with her again. He also reminded everyone that a student must ASK for relief. If a student chooses, he/she can take 3+ exams in one day and not request relief.

vii. Michael Hamper wanted to know what happens currently. John Lomax stated that if a student has 4 exams on one day, he/she can petition the Registrar’s Office for relief. The registrar then consults the affected faculty members and comes up with a solution based on input/agreement from the affected faculty members. The registrar currently receives 4-6 student requests each quarter.

viii. Brian Keas stated that the sentence says “The Registrar’s Office shall reschedule...” and not “may reschedule.” John Lomax noted that the wording is exactly the same as our current policy but that the committee will review it.

c. Bob Carrothers made a motion: In light of data provided to University Council (Attachments A and B of the minutes), the Academic Affairs Committee is requested to reconsider the start and end dates for the 2012-13 semester calendars and beyond. Second by Kay Zekany. Discussion followed.

i. Bob Carrothers commented that several A&S college faculty are concerned that ONU may be out of step with other schools with regards to the length of our semesters.

ii. Michael Milks spoke against the motion stating that there was a great deal of time, thought, debate and negotiation that went into creation of the calendar as we have it. He is opposed to shortening the number of days of instruction in the semester. Having 74 days allows pharmacy students to have enough days to complete their required coursework and required labs are not infringed on.

iii. Brian Keas stated the current proposed calendar is problematic for the biology department as there are actually more lab days impacted due to too many days off during the semester (i.e. too many incomplete weeks due to holidays, breaks).

iv. Sue Montenery stated that in looking at the data, it appears there are two different issues that need to be addressed. One is the amount of instructional time in each semester (i.e. ONU > other schools investigated) and calendar issues (i.e. days off, total amount of time to complete a 15 week semester).

v. David Crago asked if the motion is directed towards next year’s calendar (2011-12). He continued by noting that since the 2011-12 calendar was developed and approved over two years ago, we cannot undo it at this point. Plans have already been made for next year and contracts, speakers, graduation, homecoming, sporting events, etc. have all been completed and/or are in progress. Additionally, there are course delivery issues, accreditation issues,
etc. that would all need to be reviewed and addressed if any changes are made to the calendar. Bob Carrothers and Kay Zekany agreed this is more of a long-term discussion and not for 2011-12. *(SECRETARY NOTE: at this point the motion was modified with a friendly amendment to include “the 2012-13 semester calendars and beyond” instead of just “semester calendar”).*

vi. Catherine Albrecht agreed that we should LOOK INTO the calendars going forward. Since she wasn’t at ONU for any of the discussion about the calendar change, she cannot comment on the process and negotiation that went on amongst the colleges and faculty.

vii. The question was called by Chair Robeson. The motion passed.

X. **Adjournment:** Lisa Robeson adjourned the meeting at 6:20 p.m. Council will next meet on January 18, 2011.

Respectfully submitted,

Laurie K. Laird, Secretary
University Council
Attendance and Voting record

December 7, 2010

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Totals: 15 yes, 5 no, 4 abstain

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Peer and aspirational schools

Massachusetts Institute of Technology: 63 Fall, 65 Spring
Villanova: 70 Fall, 70 Spring
Creighton: 69 Fall, 71 Spring
Valparaiso: 72 Fall, 72 Spring
University of Richmond: 70 Fall, 69 Spring
Drake: 73 Fall, 73 Spring
Wake Forest: 69 Fall, 69 Spring
Gonzaga: 69 Fall, 70 Spring
Western New England: 69 Fall, 73 Spring
Pacific: 67 Fall, 67 Spring
Case Western: 70 Fall, 70 Spring
Bucknell: 70 Fall, 70 Spring
Elon: 66 Fall, 65 Spring.

My concern is that our proposed extra-long semesters will make us uncompetitive in the following ways:

1. We will negatively affect our students' finances. An extra week in the course calendar for the spring term reduces the time students have available for paid work by a week. They will be unable to return to their jobs during the short winter break, or they will be unable to earn income for a week during the summer period. We could be turning students away from ONU or restricting their capacity to pay our tuition and fees.

2. We will limit students' options for summer study abroad and internship programs. Some study abroad programs begin in May during our proposed exam period. Other programs end in August, after our proposed first day of class. If we insist on both the early start and the late finish dates, we will effectively limit students' options to the shortest of these programs. This is not ideal for learning outcomes.

3. We will negatively affect faculty research productivity. By reducing our already-limited time available in the year for research projects by one week, we make it harder for faculty to produce anything that could allow us to compare ourselves to our aspirational schools. If we take that week from the summer, we may even compromise specific projects that require sustained periods of time, particularly in the sciences. Alternatively, we could be taking one week away from the faculty's time to prepare for classes or otherwise keep abreast of their fields.

4. We will negatively affect our ability to recruit new faculty members. If our semesters are significantly longer than other schools', we could find it difficult to convince the faculty members we interview to accept a position at ONU.

I recommend that the spring semester be amended to either begin one week later or end one week earlier. This would bring us more into line with other schools (2010-11 calendar):

Villanova: January 10 to April 28
Creighton: January 12 to April 29
University of Richmond: January 10 to April 22
Drake: January 18 to May 5
Wake Forest: January 12 to April 27
Gonzaga: January 11 to April 29
Western New England: January 18 to May 6
Pacific: January 31 to May 10
Case Western: January 10 to April 25
Bucknell: January 19 to May 3
Elon: February 1 to May 10.
(MIT and Valparaiso are outliers: Valparaiso: January 5 to May 3 [2-week spring break + one day for Easter + MLK]; MIT: February 1 to May 12 [8 break days].)

I further recommend that our classroom days be reduced to the 70 (69.7) which is the average for the schools listed above, excluding MIT. I have a hard time believing that ONU is so different from our peer institutions such that we need an extra 4-5 days in the classroom to achieve what the others can achieve in fewer days. I also believe that moving our contact-hours load closer to the average of our aspirational schools is an important step toward realizing the plan called "Becoming ONU."
Additional calendars

Harvard: 125 total instruction days (UC-Berkeley website claim)
Princeton: 129 total instruction days (UC-Berkeley website claim)
Oberlin: 64 fall, 65 spring
Augustana (SD): 64 fall, 66 spring
Brown: 66 fall, 68 spring
Boston University: 67 fall, 71 spring
Lehigh: 70 fall, 70 spring
Vanderbilt: 70 fall, 70 spring
Duke: 70 fall, 70 spring
University of Rochester: 69.5 fall, 70 spring
University of Indianapolis: fall calendar unclear, 69 spring
Mount Union: 70 fall, 69 spring
Southern Methodist: 70 fall, 70 spring
Notre Dame: 70 fall, 70 spring
Illinois Wesleyan University: 70 fall, 70 spring
Denison University: 70 fall, 70 spring
University of Dayton: 71 fall, 69 spring
Carnegie Mellon: 70 fall, 71 spring
Baldwin-Wallace: 70 fall, 72 spring
Howard: 70 fall, 72 spring
Nebraska Wesleyan University: 70 fall, 73 spring
Ohio Wesleyan University: 70 fall, 74 spring
Mercer: 73 fall, 72 spring

University of Massachusetts -- Amherst: 65 fall, 66 spring
University of California -- Berkeley: 68 fall, 68 spring
University of Connecticut: 69 fall, 69 spring
University of Wisconsin -- Green Bay: 70 fall, 69 spring
Florida International University: 71 fall, 69 spring
Wayne State: 70 fall, 70 spring
University of Virginia: 71 fall, 70 spring
Central Michigan: 71 fall, 72 spring
University of Alabama: 72 fall, 71 spring
Indiana University -- South Bend: 71 fall, 72 spring
University of Texas -- Austin: 70 fall, 74 spring
Virginia Tech: 72 fall, 72 spring
University of Maryland -- College Park: 72 fall, 72 spring
North Carolina State University: 72 fall, 72 spring
University of Kentucky: 74 fall, 71 spring
University of Wisconsin -- Madison: 72 fall, 74 spring
Bowling Green State: 73 fall, 74 spring
Purdue: 74 fall, 74 spring
Penn State: 74 fall, 74 spring
University of Iowa: 76 fall, 72 spring
Georgia Institute of Technology: 75 fall, 74 spring
Miami University: 75 fall, 74 spring

Of these 45 schools, only 5 have semesters whose number of instruction days is equal to or greater than the number planned for ONU. All five of those schools are public institutions, and none are considered to be our peers. Among the private schools, 70 days appears to be the average.

Their calendars look like this:

Florida International U: Fall first: Aug. 23, last: Dec. 3; Spring first: Jan. 10, last: April 22
Mount Union: Fall first: Aug. 30, last: Dec. 10; Spring first: Jan. 10, last: April 25
Wayne State: Fall first: Sept. 1, last: Dec. 13; Spring first: Jan. 10, last: April 25
Vanderbilt: Fall first: Aug. 25, last: Dec. 9; Spring first: Jan. 12, last: April 26
Duke: Fall first: Aug. 30, last: Dec. 10; Spring first: Jan. 12, last: April 27
U of Rochester: Fall first: Sept. 1, last: Dec. 13; Spring first: Jan. 12, last: April 27
Mercer: Fall first: Aug. 24, last: Dec. 10; Spring first: Jan. 11, last: April 29
U of Kentucky: Fall first: Aug. 25, last: Dec. 10; Spring first: Jan. 12, last: April 29
Indiana U -- South Bend: Fall first: Aug. 30, last: Dec. 11; Spring first: Jan. 10, last: April 27
Ohio Wesleyan U: Fall first: Aug. 23, last: Dec. 10; Spring first: Jan. 10, last: April 28
Howard: Fall first: Aug. 23, last: Dec. 2; Spring first: Jan. 10, last: April 28
Georgia Institute of Technology: Fall first: Aug 23, last: Dec. 10; Spring first: Jan 10, last: April 29
Baldwin Wallace: Fall first: Aug. 23, last: Dec. 3; Spring first: Jan. 10, last: April 29
Carnegie Mellon: Fall first: Aug. 23, last: Dec. 3; Spring first: Jan. 10, last: April 29
Miami U: Fall first: Aug. 23, last: Dec. 10; Spring first: Jan. 10, last: April 29
North Carolina State U: Fall first: Aug. 18, last: Dec. 3; Spring first: Jan. 10, last: April 29
Bowling Green State: Fall first: Aug. 23, last: Dec. 10; Spring first: Jan. 10, last: April 29
U of Alabama: Fall first: Aug. 18, last: Dec. 3; Spring first: Jan. 12, last: April 29
Purdue: Fall first: Aug. 23, last: Dec. 11; Spring first: Jan. 10, last: April 30
Penn State: Fall first: Aug. 23, last: Dec. 10; Spring first: Jan. 10, last: April 29
Central Michigan: Fall first: Aug. 23, last: Dec. 4; Spring first: Jan. 10, last: April 30

Lehigh: Fall first: Aug. 30, last: Dec. 10; Spring first: Jan. 17, last: April 29
University of Indianapolis: Spring first: Jan. 17, last: April 29
Dayton: Fall first: Aug. 25, last: Dec. 10; Spring first: Jan. 18, last: April 29
U of Connecticut: Fall first: Aug. 30, last: Dec. 10; Spring first: Jan. 18, last: April 29
Denison: Fall first: Aug. 30, last: Dec. 14; Spring first: Jan. 17, last: May 2
U of Virginia: Fall first: Aug. 24, last: Dec. 7; Spring first: Jan. 19, last: May 3
U Massachusetts -- Amherst: Fall first: Sept. 7, last: Dec. 10; Spring first: Jan. 18, last: May 3
Southern Methodist: Fall first: Aug. 23, last: Dec. 6; Spring first: Jan. 18, last: May 3
Virginia Tech: Fall first: Aug 23, last: Dec 8; Spring first: Jan 18, last: May 4
Notre Dame: Fall first: Aug. 24, last: Dec. 9; Spring first: Jan. 18, last: May 4
Boston University: Fall first: Sept. 2, last: Dec. 10; Spring first: Jan. 18, last: May 5
Nebraska Wesleyan U: Fall first: Aug. 23, last: Dec. 10; Spring first: Jan. 18, last: May 6
University of Texas -- Austin: Fall first: Aug. 25, last: Dec. 3; Spring first: Jan. 18, last: May 6
University of Wisconsin -- Madison: Fall first: Sept. 2, last: Dec. 15; Spring first: Jan. 18, last: May 6
University of Iowa: Fall first: Aug. 23, last: Dec. 10; Spring first: Jan. 19, last: May 7

U Wisconsin -- Green Bay: Fall first: Sept. 2, last: Dec. 13; Spring first: Jan. 24, last: May 6
U Maryland -- College Park: Fall first: Aug. 30, last: Dec. 10; Spring first: Jan. 24, last: May 10
Brown: Fall first: Sept. 1, last: Dec. 8; Spring first: Jan. 26, last: May 10
Augustana (SD): Fall first: Sept. 8, last: Dec. 13; Spring first: Feb. 2, last: May 13
Oberlin: Fall first: Sept. 7, last: Dec. 14; Spring first: Feb. 7, last: May 14
Illinois Wesleyan U: Fall first: Aug. 23, last: Dec. 3; Spring first: Jan. 5, last: April 19

The first group has Spring start dates similar to the one planned for ONU, but all these schools, including those
with more instruction days than ONU, end instruction before ONU does. The second group has Spring end
dates similar to ONU's, but all these schools, including those with more instruction days than ONU, start one
week later than ONU. The third group has unusually short, early or delayed Spring semesters. No school
stretches the spring semester over more than 16 weeks (excluding exams). All instruction and spring breaks
occur within 16 weeks. My concern is that ONU has proposed the nation's longest spring semester in addition
to one of the nation's most intensive semesters in regards to instruction days. As I mentioned before, I believe
we should make our semesters more like those of our peer and aspirational schools if we hope to achieve the
plans for "Becoming ONU".