Minutes of the September 27 Meeting

I. President DiBiasio called the meeting to order at 11:02 AM.

II. Invocation was offered by David Rouch.

III. Minutes from May 10, 2010 and August 12, 2011 were approved as submitted.

IV. Unfinished Business: None

V. Report from University Council: Sherry Young reported that they are continuing to update university documents to reflect the transition to semesters. In addition, they are in the process of determining the number of ONU credits that are necessary for transfer students to be awarded an ONU degree in each major and minor. She noted that faculty members should feel free to contact her or other council representatives with questions or concerns. The best way to contact Sherry is by email.

VI. Questions for the President:
   a. President DiBiasio announced that the Board of Trustees will elect a new chairman, John Bishop, and a new vice chairman, Dan Walker. (The board has two vice-chairs that serve staggered terms. Oscar Mifsud is currently a vice-chair.) The transfer will occur during the October Board meeting.
   b. President DiBiasio noted that October is audit month. A few adjustments will be made to the preliminary budget that was approved in May prior to presenting it to the Board during the October meeting. On a positive note, total revenue is greater than what was anticipated which will permit the university to avoid borrowing internally. Changing the endowment draw rate policy from 4.5% to 5.0% will also negate the need for special draws on the endowment.
   c. President DiBiasio mentioned that there will be two health forums during the next week. Information will be provided regarding the three plan options that will be available next year.
   d. President DiBiasio acknowledged that the sustainable program and financial base review is underway and that everyone has been working towards the deadline. The committee’s work will have great value in determining ways to make the university operationally effective and efficient.
   e. President DiBiasio announced that the search for a Vice President of Financial Affairs was launched last Wednesday. The university is currently working with AGB Search to identify good quality candidates.
   f. President DiBiasio then opened up the floor to questions.
   g. Margot Cullen asked whether the committee for program and financial review has a template with which to review case statements. She noted that she uses a rubric with benchmarks when evaluating students and wondered whether the committee had benchmarks with which to work. President DiBiasio responded that the committee is not working with quantitative indicators but is operating under the global set of criteria to identify operational effectiveness and efficiency. The
committee will bring forth recommendations that emerge from the colleges and vice presidents.

h. Mike Milks asked whether there had been a change in the severance policy in response to an IRS mandate. President DiBiasio said decisions regarding that policy were made prior to his arrival. He is aware of some issues regarding notification, but does not know specifics.

VII. Reports from Constitutional Committees:

a. Budget and Appropriations: Ron Beaschler announced that the committee will meet next week.

b. Academic Affairs: John Lomax noted that the committee sent a recommendation to University Council regarding changes to the final exam schedule for next year. The committee is also working on how old a course can be on a transcript and still be considered for credit towards a degree.

i. Nils Reiss asked for clarification regarding the specific final exam schedule recommendation. John Lomax stated that the committee recommended inserting another final exam time period between 1:30 and 4 PM Monday – Friday for a total of nine exam periods during the day with an additional four common exam periods on Monday – Thursday evenings. The committee also recommended a set of priorities for resolving conflicts between final exams that are scheduled concurrently. First, true common exams (e.g. all students take the same exam at the same time) receive first priority (e.g. Introductory Chemistry, Introductory Biology). Second priority will be given to courses with multiple sections but different exams (e.g. Great Works, Western Civilization). The third consideration will be the number of students enrolled in the course. Final exam week will be very similar to this year, but will start earlier (7:30 AM) and will have a shorter lunch period (1/2 hour). The committee will discuss a more flexible lunch and dinner hour with Sodexho for that week.

ii. Nils Reiss asked who makes the final decision regarding exam conflicts. John Lomax responded that the committee for final exams makes the final decision.

c. Student Affairs: No report.

d. Personnel: Kay Zekany announced that the committee has been discussing benefit changes as of July 1, 2011. If you would like to maximize your TIAA-CREF contribution each year, be sure to re-sign up every year.

VIII. Reports from Operational Committees:

a. Athletic Events: Tom Simmons clarified that athletes are NOT allowed to miss class due to practice. It is not acceptable and is a violation of NCAA rules.
b. Cultural Events: Nils Reiss mentioned that the committee is currently restructuring. Laurie Bell is on sabbatical. A new managing director for the Performing Arts Center starts on October 6, 2011.

c. International Affairs: Julie Hurtig announced that the committee will meet next week to plan an international affairs week that will occur in November.

d. Religious Affairs: No report.

e. Information Technology: Lou Lobenhofer noted that the committee has discussed issues, but has nothing specific to report.

IX. Other Reports: None.

X. New Business: None.

XI. Announcements:

a. Nils Reiss announced that a symphony concert will be held in the Freed Center on October 6th prior to the presidential inauguration. Come to the box office for tickets.

b. Julie Hurtig clarified that the registrar’s website does have common final exam times posted for this semester. On the registrar’s website, click on “Final Exams,” then “Fall Semester.”

c. Suzanne Morrison reminded everyone that six Tibetan monks will be visiting the ONU campus October 12 – October 19. Be sure to visit the Elzay Gallery to watch the construction of a sand mandala.

d. Ben Ayling announced that a Choral Collage is scheduled for Friday, Sept. 30, at 8 p.m. There will be performances by: Men's Chorus, University Singers, and the A Cappella Ensemble all under the direction of Ben Ayling. There will also be a performance by the Women's Chorus under the direction of Denise D'Arca. The performances will be held in Presser Hall.

e. Jay Mager announced that two world-renowned ethnobotanists from Ethiopia, Dr. Nigist Asfaw and Dr. Sebsebe Demissew, will be visiting the ONU campus October 26 – October 28. Their plenary talk, entitled “Aromatic Plants, People and Sustainable Use: The Ethiopian Experience,” will be held in the Freed Center on October 26 at 7 PM. The Sigma Xi lecture presented by Dr. Demissew will be the following evening on October 27 at 7 PM in HPPEC 151. The title of that lecture is “Global Biodiversity Hotspots in the Horn of Africa and Plant Resource Potentials.” If you would like to meet with them, contact Jay.

f. Deirdre Meyers mentioned that a free lipid screening will be available on Homecoming from 7:30 – 10:30 AM in Pharmacy.

g. Nils Reiss said that if you’ve lost that loving feeling, you can find it Saturday with Bill Medley and the Righteous Brothers at the Freed Center.

XII. The meeting adjourned at 11:35 AM.

Submitted by,
Leslie A. Riley
Secretary