

**The Association of the University of Akron Retirees (AUAR)
Executive Board Meeting, April 28, 2016
Alumni Conference Room, InfoCision Stadium**

- 1. Opening Remarks.** The Board meeting was called to order by President Diane Vukovich at 10:000 a.m. Others present were Bob Blankenship, Frank Thomas Loren Hoch. Rita Klein, Neal, Raber, Cathy Edwards, Laura Moss, Pam Rupert, Dan Sheffer, Linda Sugarman, Ed Lasher, Bob Gandee, Carl Lieberman, Hans Zbinden and Tom Vukovich. Absent with notice: Stu Terrass.
The minutes of the March 24, 2016 meeting were approved as written.
- 2. Treasurer** Bob Blankenship reports a balance of \$4,804.96 as of March 31, 2016. This compares with a balance of \$7,312.83 for March, 2015. It was moved to accept the report, subject to audit.
- 3. Committee Reports.**
 - A. Programs.** Tom Vukovich reported that there are 3 speakers listed now for next fall's luncheons. The April 22 annual Road Trip this year took us to Warren, Ohio, a trip enjoyed by 32 participants. For the Lobster and Suds Party on May 20, Diane and Tom distributed a lengthy listing of helpers and their responsibilities.
 - B. Membership.** Frank Thomas reports that the current numbers show that we have 320 active members and 36 inactive members and out of this we have 20 new members for a total of 356 members on the file.
 - C. Political Action.** On the broad subject of our University of Akron difficulties, Bob Gandee shared with us the following statement, sent by mail to our AUAR President, Dr. Diane Vukovich,

Dear Dr. Vukovich,

The Ohio Council of Higher Education Retirees at its March 22, 2016 meeting unanimously passed the following resolution: The Ohio Council of Higher Education Retirees supports the efforts of the Association of the University of Akron Retirees to represent the interests and express the concerns of retired faculty and staff of the University who desire to be heard on matters of University governance and administration of the institution to which they remain loyal and committed.

Sincerely,

Dr. Roger C. Anderson, President
Ohio Council of Higher Education Retirees
- D. Benefits.** No report.
- E. Faculty Senate. April 7, 2016** Neal Raber reporting.
Just when you had heard it all and you thought it couldn't get any worse at UA, we learned about block cohort enrollment and pre-registration initiatives utilized primarily by the Center for Academic Advising and Student Success.

E. Faculty Senate. April 7, 2016(cont.)

On the day of New Student Orientation, incoming freshmen are pre-registered in courses, including specific sections and day/time combinations, prior to advising and without student input. Registration holds are also applied which prohibit students from altering their fall schedule without adviser consent. The members of each cohort are enrolled together in the same section of every course. From the student perspective, these practices constitute the wholesale elimination of choice inherent in the transition to college. From the institutional perspective, these initiatives fundamentally alter enrollment patterns, arbitrarily boosting enrollment in specific sections and departments while limiting access to others.

In his opening remarks, Chair Rich said that the Academic Policies Committee would be bringing to Faculty Senate a proposal to recommend a suspension of the Student Success Division's "block cohort enrollment" and pre-registration initiatives. He mentioned that UA is not a high school and we have already lost 1/3 of incoming freshmen. Telling students what their class schedules had to be without consideration of their choices and of their work schedules would only contribute to a further loss of enrollment. Upperclassmen are prevented from taking these sections because of the blocks being reserved for incoming freshmen. He said, "There is no doubt that undergraduate students benefit from academic advice and guidance, but this initiative goes well beyond providing advice and guidance into the realm of paternalistic authoritarianism. This is a university, not a high school."

Chair Rich concluded his remarks by stating that in the interests of truth in advertising, instead of calling UA's *Ohio's Polytechnic University*, it should be called *Ohio's Authoritarian University!* In her Executive Committee report, Senator Schulze mentioned that very few students had shown interest in the Core Cadet program. Perhaps, team Scarborough could just go ahead and draft students into the program!

Next on the agenda was Interim Provost Ramsier, because President Scarborough had informed Chair Rich that he could not attend today's meeting. He started by saying that the search for Associate Provost for Assessment has been put on hold, because the pool of applicants was weak. There was an offer out for Engineering Dean. Some faculty searches have just gotten started and if suitable hires are not found, because of the timeline, he would go ahead with visiting positions instead of permanent ones. He also said that he has stopped block cohort enrollment. On the subject of new student orientation, Associate Provost Messina is heading up what used to be called Student Affairs and he wants faculty help, because it is not working. He also wants to evaluate the Student Success course to see if it is successful. Help is also needed with student placement in courses. Needless to say, none of this was a problem until Scarborough terminated so many advisors.

Senator Sterns told Ramsier that we have had a Community and Technical College for years and it has successfully met the needs of Summit County students; yet, there is no response coming forward from the administration to the encroachment by our

E. Faculty Senate. April 7, 2016(cont)

competitors Ramsier said that when he served as Acting Dean of CAST, an advertising campaign was in the planning stages. Nothing has proceeded under Dean Rickel, and Ramsier has communicated to him that this should be a high priority.

In response to a question by Senator Klein about whether UA is going ahead with the purchase of ITT Tech in spite of all the fraud charges, Ramsier said that he could not respond. However, he said that the institution would do what is best for the institution.

Senator Landis asked about the progress of dealing with the points in the no confidence resolution. Ramsier said that all points have been taken seriously by the BOT. He said that he, personally, serves the institution and is working to rebuild the trust; however, the damage that has been done will not be fixed overnight. He went on to claim that changes in how the institution is run are in progress. He said, "Serious action deserves serious attention. Block scheduling should never have happened." He said that he is serious about making the place whole again.

Next, Senator Bouchard let him have it about the General Education Core 13 courses being taught on the cheap out of Wayne College. She said that the program is not working. She continued saying, "It has not attracted new students to UA, but instead has cannibalized the CAS. The courses are not blended, as repeatedly promised in the past by Scarborough, and there is no oversight of the instructors hired to teach the courses. The faculty members in our Sociology Department have never heard of the person hired to teach the Core 13 Sociology course. Only 16% of the students who took a course in the fall returned to take another one in the spring. The students taking these courses were flunking at a higher rate than regular in-person courses or even online courses on campus." She said the program should be cancelled for fall. Ramsier responded that the data from the fall semester is all negative and he does not disagree with Senator Bouchard. But a decision to terminate the program must be based on more data.

She countered by saying that it makes sense to cancel it now. She said that when President Scarborough was still talking to her, which was last fall, he said that if it is not working, he would turn on a dime. She said that we are now at the dime.

Senator Feltey then inquired if the administration had taken a stand on House Bill 48, which is the gun bill that would allow carrying weapons on campus. If it, in fact, passes in Columbus, it'll be up to individual universities then to pass a policy about what will be permitted at individual campuses. She said, "I personally -- I teach in a lecture hall much larger than this, and I don't relish the thought of walking in and imagining guns in handbags and pockets, but there's always online, so I'll hide there safely. There is evidence in states where it's been passed that faculty are being advised to be less controversial in their classes, to kind of address students in a way that'll be not upsetting.

”

In his response, Ramsier made sure to tell us that he is not opposed to handguns, as if

E. Faculty Senate. April 7, 2016(cont.)

any one of us cared. I felt like telling him that I am not opposed to barbers! He added that he would be opposed to allowing guns on the UA campus. Ramsier said that he cannot speak for the Board, but the decision to allow firearms on campus would ultimately be up to them.

With the quality of the thinking of our current Board, I anticipate seeing bazookas on campus! I can only say that in these times, it is great to be a retired faculty member. Needless to say the proposal brought forth by the Academic Policies Committee to end block cohort scheduling was passed unanimously and essentially was a moot issue. The chair of the Athletics Committee, Professor John Nicholas brought forth the proposal that we become permanent members of COIA, the Coalition of Intercollegiate Athletics. COIA is an alliance of faculty senates from the NCAA FBS Division. Its mission is to provide a national faculty voice on intercollegiate sports issues. Their areas of concern include academic integrity, equality, student athlete welfare, campus government, governance of intercollegiate athletics, commercialization, and fiscal responsibility. The motion passed unanimously

There was discussion about athletics. We learned that UA broke even when it came to the costs of sending the team to the "Idaho Famous Potato Bowl", but that did not include the cost of sending the band to the bowl game. Also, we learned that athletic advisors have the ability to place athletes in any class regardless of whether the student has completed the prerequisites. One senator complained that on four occasions student athletes were placed in his class without completing the required prerequisites, in order to keep them academically eligible moving towards a degree. In all cases, the student athletes failed the course.

We also learned that in terms of academics our student athletes are third in the MAC overall. Women's and men's golf are through the roof. They had an average GPA of 3.8 Football was about 2.8. Basketball was around 3.0, with women's basketball a little higher, and the track and field team and the rifle team were all very high.

Next, we heard a report from Carolyn Behrman, Faculty Director of Collaboration of the EXL Center. She started by saying that, sometime last summer, prior to the firing of 216 people, President Scarborough identified two strategic initiatives, one of which was the Big Data Center with Dr. Mario Garzia and the other one was Jeff Hoffman's Experiential Learning Center for Entrepreneurship and Civic Engagement. The goal of the center is to support and enhance activities that are already taking place by faculty within courses or within independent studies or to support the efforts that already exist on campus in terms of internships and co-ops.

Carolyn Behrman said that her job with the center is to work with faculty to increase experiential learning. She continued saying that for those of you who know Theresa

E. Faculty Senate. April 7, 2016(cont

Beyerle, I hope you're thinking that's her job. She said, "She did a really good job and they, for a variety of reasons that I am not privy to, did not retain her in that position and she is not really replaceable; so as a faculty member who is engaged in the faculty activities, I'm doing a slightly different thing. The EXL Center generated resources from a number of sources. The initial funding for Hoffman's position I believe comes through that \$10 million of new initiatives."

Senator Klein asked her the following question: One of the very best experiential Learning opportunities is study abroad, and if there were a course where the entire course isn't taught abroad, but a component of it involves travel, what kinds of resources does the University or the EXL Center possibly provide for that very important learning experience? She responded, "We killed international student programs. We have reduced resources all over the place. A gentleman I don't know named Dave Black is all alone in an office trying to manage a huge number of things and they have -- modern languages people, if they are here, will tell us just exactly how crazy it got in terms of canceling study abroad and then reinstating some. We, right now, on three faculty driven initiatives, for the entire process, assuming we can pull it off, are spending about \$62,000. So that doesn't go very far for study abroad."

Next Senator Stearns presented a report of the representatives to Graduate Council after circulating a list of the strategic initiatives of the Graduate School. In his report, he pointed out that Dean Midha has just become the new dean and Charles Beneke has just started as Associate Dean for Academics in the Graduate School, so that they are really kind of rebuilding the enterprise. So much for our Graduate School!!!

During the New Business portion of the meeting, Senator Bouchard introduced a motion that stated the following: the GenEd Core 13 was put into place without meaningful faculty input; and, whereas, the results from the first year have shown it to fail at attracting or retaining or educating our students to high standards; and, whereas, delays in making decisions about next fall's classes would only hurt our students; therefore, be it resolved that the program should be immediately suspended.

There was a great deal of discussion about the motion. Associate Dean Kennedy of CAST stated, "The students who are in our applied and technical programs should be taking our Gen Ed. But they are being put into an English sequence which prohibits them from completing our technical report writing with the appropriate skills. So instead of taking our English 121, which actually has more argumentation, when they enter our technical report writing, they are not as prepared.

Senator Schulze said, "Every time we have talked to the President about this program, in Senate and Faculty Senate EC, he brings up how wonderful blended learning is and

E. Faculty Senate. April 7, 2016(cont

that this is part of the reason we are doing it; because it's blended and blended is best and that's what he likes the best. And I always bring up the webpage, and I note that it still says courses will be blended learning, including online classroom and experiential learning elements. And I brought up to him more than once that that is not the case.

We are saying it here, but we are not doing it. And that's, that's bad. And he said, yeah, you're right, we should do it if we say we are going to do it. But then nothing ever changes. And that's a frustration for me personally that we can't just do what -- we can't just do what we say we are going to -- if we can't even follow through on things that we have advertised, and once this is pointed out, the advertisement doesn't even change. It doesn't seem to bother anybody that we're lying publicly, and have been for an extended period of time.”

Finally, an amended motion was approved to refer the matter to the Academic Policies Committee with the direction to report back on the resolution at the May Faculty Senate meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 5:13 pm.

I must say, what I hear at the Faculty Senate about the goings on at UA can be summed up in one word: *DEPRESSING!* Fortunately, there is only one more meeting this school year!

By the way, on the Cleveland Indians broadcasts, I heard Tom Hamilton say, “The opening lineups are brought to you by The University of Akron. Are you out there?” And at the end of the game, he mentions the sponsors and concludes with, “The University of Akron. Visit are you out there.com.”

So we have a stupid slogan and we are advertising on a baseball broadcast – the university that doesn't have a baseball team!!!

F. University and Community Service / Website. Dan Sheffer reports that the Website events will be updated by May 1. In the ensuing discussion it is was clear that we must draw attention to the information in our Website.

G.Scholarship. No report.

H.Newsletter. Pam Rupert indicated that our Newsletter will be published in September.

4. Unfinished Business. Nominations. There being no additional Nominations from the Membership, It was moved to approve the following slate of candidates to serve as Officers or representatives of the Association of the University of Akron Retirees, beginning July 1, 2016. The slate was approved unanimously:

4. Unfinished Business. Nominations(cont.)

Vice President	Dan Sheffer
Treasurer	Robert Blankenship
Recording Secretary	Rita Klein
Corresponding Secretary	Martha Vye
Public Relations Officer	Pamela Rupert

Members at Large of the Executive Board.

Stuart Terrass, John Heminger, Cathy Edwards

Faculty Senate Representatives.
Robert Gandee, Ali Hajjafar

The meeting adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

Hans Zbinden, recording secretary
Next Executive Board Meeting is May 26, 2016
Alumni Conference Room, InfoCision Stadium

Minutes (68)

