

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FACULTY SENATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

Room 101, Law Building, Monday, February 6, 1950

The Faculty Senate convened in regular session at 3:40 p.m. on Monday, February 3, in Room 101 of the Law Building. Twenty-nine members were present, with Vice-President Nugent presiding. Dr. Rhodes acted for Dr. Haury, and Mr. Windsor served for Mr. Leshner.

Minutes of the meeting of January 9 were approved as published.

DELINQUENT SCHOLARSHIP CASES SECOND SEMESTER, METHOD OF HANDLING: Dr. Nugent asked Mr. Windsor to review the procedure followed the first semester in the handling of delinquent scholarship cases. Mr. Windsor reported that, inasmuch as a preliminary scholarship report had not been published, in general students who were failing in 50% of their work at midsemester had automatically been placed on probation rather than disqualified. The Senate had adopted such a policy early in the fall and had further provided that students withdrawing within ten days after the publication of the midsemester report would be authorized to re-enroll for the second semester on probation. Mr. Windsor pointed out that in some instances students had been disqualified at midsemester by special action in accordance with the catalog statement which provides that an academic dean may, with the approval of the Advisory Council, disqualify a student at any time for neglect of his academic work. The question now was what procedure should be followed for the second semester, inasmuch as the policy adopted in the fall had been for the first semester only.

Dean Harvill stated he felt it was necessary to have the procedure for the second semester established at this time so that students and faculty alike could know in advance what the University policy would be. He reminded the Senate that action in the fall had been for one semester only, and at that time it was intended to consider the second semester policy in the light of experience gained during the first semester. The Dean said that the first semester 50% failure list, which he had just received, indicated that after allowing for an increase that could be expected, in view of the fact that there were no general disqualifications at midsemester, it still appeared that in the College of Liberal Arts there was approximately a 20-30% increase in the number of students on the list over the number listed at the close of first semester a year ago. This might be significant, Dean Harvill pointed out; and yet, he reminded the Senate, there are often unexplainable variations from year to year.

Dean Butler stated that the situation in the College of Engineering was similar to that in the Liberal Arts College. He pointed out, however, that he was not surprised, as many of the persons who had opposed the abolishment of a preliminary scholarship report had predicted a substantial increase in the number of 50% failures at the close of the semester. The question, Dean Butler said, is whether or not the increase in 50% failures is sufficiently great to justify the great amount of labor involved in preparing a preliminary report.

Dr. Roberts stated that it had been his observation that at the time the new policy was announced in the fall, there appeared to be considerable jubilation on the part of students, particularly concerning the doing away with the pre-D report. Many students had interpreted that action as meaning there would be no examinations at the usual pre-D time, and his students were surprised to learn

that he was giving examinations as always. Mr. Roberts wondered whether a substantial number of the faculty members had interpreted the policy as meaning that they should not give a quiz at the close of the first five weeks. He felt there was a tendency on the part of faculty members to give fewer examinations, and the result of this was that students' difficulties accumulated throughout the semester.

The response to Dr. Roberts' statement, however, was that in general it was felt that in all divisions of the University no fewer quizzes were being given than in previous years.

Professor Cardon stated that he felt that the lack of a pre-D report gave the student assurance that there was small chance he would be dismissed at mid-semester, and the student, therefore, felt safe for the first half of the semester, no matter what he did.

Dean Brown and Dean Harvill pointed out that the deans could disqualify at any time students who were neglecting their academic work and stated that in a number of instances students were disqualified by the Advisory Council upon recommendation of their academic deans.

Dean Butler stated that he did not feel the one semester experience with the new plan gave sufficient basis for deciding permanent policy and moved that the procedure followed first semester be followed during the second. This motion was seconded by Dr. Roberts.

Professor Borgquist stated he could not agree with the proposal, because he felt that because students were no longer being disqualified at midsemester there was a general "letting down" through the student body. He pointed out he had observed this as being particularly true in the College of engineering, and he had been surprised at the large number of civil engineering seniors who had failed 50% of their work at the end of the first semester.

Dean Butler pointed out that in the fall he had been in favor of disqualifying at midsemester, but that President McCormick had felt that in general midsemester disqualifications in the absence of a preliminary report were unwise as such procedure meant students would be dropped from the University without previous warning. Dean Butler felt that the President probably would still have the same attitude and he doubted the wisdom of making a change until the President could be present to express his views.

Dr. Roberts stated that he had seconded Dean Butler's motion, although in general his attitude was in line with that of Professor Borgquist and Dr. Cardon. However, he pointed out, in the fall the Senate had authorized an experiment, and he did not feel that the experiment had yet been carried far enough to draw conclusions. He felt that another semester's experience should be added to what has been learned during the first semester. Then, if, after a full year of operating under the new plan, it is felt that some changes should be made, it might well be in order to consider adjustments.

Professor Gray said that because the preliminary report was not being published did not mean students were not being warned if they were doing poorly in their work. A student consistently receiving "4's" and "5's" in quizzes knows he is not doing well.

Dean Harvill pointed out that the question of advance warning had applied more to parents than to students. He reminded the Senate that parents seldom object when a student is disqualified if they have known in advance that the student has not been doing well. On the other hand, almost all parents object strenuously when a student is disqualified and the parents have not been advised in advance that the student has been having difficulty.

Professor Houghton pointed out that his impression from his dealings with students was that because midyear disqualifications were no longer common students felt there was an easing up on standards.

Dr. Solve stated that it seemed to him that the weakness in the policy was the permitting of students on the 50% list at midsemester to withdraw within ten days and thus be eligible to re-register on probation the following semester. Such procedure could go on indefinitely, he pointed out, and the student would never be disqualified from the University.

Dr. Nugent asked whether or not a solution might be to eliminate the ten-day withdrawal provision and include on the final 50% list anyone who withdraws during the semester with "5's" in 50% of his work.

Dean Harvill then moved to amend Dean Butler's motion so as to provide that any student who withdraws at any time during the semester after the first two weeks would, if he received failing grades in 50% or more of the units carried, be considered on the same basis as any other student who completed the semester and was a 50% failure.

Dean Brown seconded this motion and the amendment was accepted by Dean Butler and Dr. Roberts.

Dean Harvill pointed out that this provision was not a harsh one because the scholarship committees would take into account such facts as that the student may have received a "5" early in the semester after attending class for only a few weeks, doing poorly, and dropping the course. He felt that the scholarship committees are well qualified to weigh all factors in every case.

The Senate voted approval of the amendment to the motion, and then Dean Butler's motion as amended was carried.

Dean Harvill asked that the Deans be informed as to what was the official date ending the ten-day period following the publication of the midsemester delinquent report first semester, during which time students were authorized to withdraw with the provision that they could return on probation second semester. (Note: This date was November 18, 1949.)

DELINQUENT SCHOLARSHIP POLICY. PUBLICITY RE: Dr. Nugent asked the Secretary to provide the Wildcat with publicity concerning the policy to be followed in handling scholarship cases second semester.

Miss Gillmor felt that emphasis should be given in publicity reminding students that even though a preliminary report is no longer published, "5's" received in quizzes at any time during the semester, early or late, are very important.

Dr. Carpenter said he was impressed by the discussion concerning scholarship generally and moved that the Minutes show the concensus of the Senate to be that the decision to continue the policy of not disqualifying students at midsemester

should not be considered as tending to impair the frequency of examinations. He added that publicity should point out that individual disqualifications still may take place at any time upon recommendation of the academic dean. This motion was seconded by Dean Lyman and carried.

Professor Borgquist pointed out that he felt publicity should make it clear that the policy for the second semester was simply a continuation of an experiment. He personally felt that it would be a mistake to continue the policy into another year and thought the Senate should announce at this time that it was simply a temporary procedure. He moved that such an attitude be expressed by the Senate. This was seconded by Dr. Roberts.

Dr. Schneck brought out the fact that it was not possible to predict in the middle of an experiment what the conclusions would be when the experiment was finished. Dean Butler pointed out that at the end of the year the Senate possibly would decide to continue the policy.

Professor Borgquist then changed his motion to indicate that publicity concerning the arrangement should indicate that the policy was simply the continuation for one semester of an experiment and was not necessarily a permanent policy. The motion, as amended, was again seconded by Dr. Roberts and carried.

Professor Cardon asked that at the first meeting of the Senate in the fall of 1950 Senate members be provided with summaries of the scholarship reports of the two semesters of this year, as compared with previous years, so that the entire matter could be reviewed at that time. The Secretary was instructed to provide such material at the first meeting in October, 1950.

50% FAILURES, DISCUSSION RE MORE PROMPT HANDLING OF: Dean MacCready pointed out that in the women's dormitories considerable difficulty had been experienced because some students had not known for a week or ten days after the opening of the second semester whether they were to be disqualified from the University. The uncertainty of their plans caused dormitory problems. She wondered whether disqualifications could be handled more promptly, particularly for students who are already on probation. This, of course, would necessitate faster processing of final grades in the office of the Registrar.

Mr. Windsor stated that he did not think it was possible for final grades to be processed any more rapidly than is now being done. It was pointed out that at present failing grades are processed immediately after being reported.

Dr. Nugent asked Mr. Windsor to inquire whether or not it would be feasible to speed up the procedure of preparing the 50% failure list.

WELCOME EXTENDED TO DR. SOLVE: Dr. Nugent took occasion at this point in the meeting to welcome back to the Senate, Faculty Chairman Melvin Solve, who recently returned to the campus after a semester's sabbatical leave, during which time he and Mrs. Solve completed a five-month visit to Europe.

DISQUALIFICATION POLICY, GENERAL ATTITUDE TOWARD SEVERITY OF: Mr. Windsor stated that Mr. Leshner felt that it would be appropriate for the Senate to consider what should be the general attitude concerning the degree of severity to be used in handling students on the 50% list at the end of the semester; in other words, what should be the attitude of the various scholarship committees and the Advisory Council in view of the fact that students were not disqualified at midsemester?

Dean Butler pointed out that a main problem in this connection was the

policy to be followed as regards first-semester freshmen. In the past it has in general been the practice to take into consideration the fact that first-semester freshmen were experiencing an adjustment and their cases have not been handled so severely as have been those of other students. He pointed out that in the past, however, this consideration had been applied at the time of midsemester disqualification. Since there were no midterm disqualifications this fall, he wondered what the Senate's feeling was concerning disqualifications at the present time. If standards are to be maintained, he pointed out, all 50% failures should be dealt with severely, with the possible exception of first-semester freshmen. For freshmen, he felt leniency would be proper. He felt uniformity should be practiced throughout the University.

Dr. Roberts stated he did not see how uniformity could be maintained, inasmuch as there are so many differences of opinion as to what constitutes leniency.

Dean Butler pointed out that an approach to uniformity is all that can be expected. He pointed out that in the College of Engineering first-semester freshmen who are 50% failures at midsemester usually are not 50% failures at the close of the term. The Dean stated it was likely that on the 50% list for every college, published at the close of the first semester, the majority of students are freshmen.

Dr. Schneck asked Dean Butler if he felt there was a need for any change in the policy as followed in previous semesters. He suggested that all students should be dealt with severely, except that in the case of first-semester freshmen there should be a "leaning toward leniency."

Dean Butler stated that he would like to see such a policy continued, and, that if there was no objection, the Council would act accordingly.

NEW COURSES, REPORT OF: Dr. Nugent called to the attention of the Senate the report of new courses already distributed in dittoed form to the members. There was no objection concerning these.

REPORT OF COMMITTEE TO ESTABLISH NEW METHOD OF FINDING SENIOR RANK: Professor Rhodes reviewed the background which led to the formation of his committee and discussed briefly the work of this committee (see Minutes of October 3, 1949, and the Report). The Committee submitted to the Senate the following recommendation: p. 3 pp. 11a-c

"As a result of its study, the Committee recommends a change in the present plan of computing class average for graduating seniors by adoption of the following provision: Senior class standing shall be based upon the general average of the student's work in residence, with the provision that, in order to be officially ranked, the student must have completed not less than 60 credits in residence. In the computation of the grade average, transfer credits, credits completed in correspondence study, and credits completed by examination shall be excluded. Credits completed in extension class work established as residence credits will be included.

"It is further provided that the record of the graduating senior who fails to meet the above requirement will include the following note: 'Unranked: completed less than 60 units in residence.'

"It is further provided that in listing the grade rank the student's position with relation to the total number graduated, including those not ranked, will be indicated."

Professor Barnes asked if a special provision should be made for students in the College of Law. Dr. Rhodes stated he believed that detail had escaped the

attention of the Committee entirely. Dr. Nugent and Dr. Houghton suggested that possibly this could be settled by simply referring to the requirement as "half of the number of units required for the degree." Professor Rhodes pointed out this had been considered but since the number of units required for graduation varies from college to college it seemed wiser to choose an arbitrary number. He pointed out that half of the units required for a Liberal Arts degree, for example, would be $62\frac{1}{2}$ and it would not be advisable to deal with half units. He also pointed out that the Committee specifically avoided setting the number at 70 units, because this would eliminate most students transferring from junior colleges.

Dean Lyons pointed out that a special notation in the catalog indicated that for the awarding of special honors a student in the College of Law must complete a specified number of credits (53 units). Dean Lyons moved adoption of the recommendation from Dr. Rhodes' Committee with the provision that for students in the College of Law the residence requirement by 53 units. This was seconded by Dr. Barnes.

Dr. Roberts asked if this new procedure would affect the awarding of special honors—"highest distinction, high distinction," etc. Dr. Rhodes pointed out that for any of the special honors a student must have completed a minimum of 60 units in residence. He pointed out that his committee had no recommendation whatsoever in connection with special honors.

Dr. Roberts stated that he thought that the awarding of special class honors should be looked into. He felt that the scales are weighted to a certain extent against the student who takes four years work at the University, in favor of the student who takes only two years. Most students do their poorer work in the first two years. Dr. Roberts moved postponing consideration of the report until a later meeting.

It was pointed out that there was no connection between the report and recommendation from Dr. Rhodes' Committee and the awarding of special honors. The Committee was dealing simply with the question of the method of ranking seniors in the graduating class. There was no second to Dr. Roberts' motion.

Dr. Schneck stated that there was nothing in the report that would interfere with investigating the policy concerning the awarding of special honors. Dr. Gray then called for the question, and the motion passed.

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.


David L. Windsor
Secretary Pro Tem