

Minutes of the Meeting held December 14, 2007

Present: Billman , McKee (OSU), Milburn (Central State), Ahuja (YSU), Gelman, Ray (CSU), Wright (OU), Gunning (UT-HSC), Cuppoletti (UC), Laux, Casper (KSU), Bernhard, Muego (BGSU), Fenwick (UA)

Chair Cuppoletti called the meeting to order at 12:30 pm.

The minutes of the November 9, 2008 were approved unanimously.

New Business

Dr. Cuppoletti reminded OFC that Chancellor Fingerhut was meeting with the group.

There was discussion of who should be invited to meet with OFC in January and February. It was suggested that OFC invite Senator Fedor and Representative Husted.

There was an update on SB 151. It was still in the Senate Education Committee.

There was a discussion of the Master Plan for the University System of Ohio regarding strategies for increasing enrollment, as well as the other goals, and what were the consequences for individual universities. Was each university responsible for meeting each goal, or were the goals for the System as a whole? If the later, who would determine which universities were responsible for meeting which goals?

It was also asked if new scholarships would provide enough money for significant enrollment increases in 2008-09.

Chancellor Fingerhut was introduced at 1:30.

He began the discussion by stating that the document outlining the goals of the University System was still being modified in response to comments and meeting with various groups.

Chancellor Fingerhut said that the document established statewide goals and metrics, and that each university would contribute differently to the overall University System goals.

Page 2

Goal 17 (increasing the percentage of Ohioans aged 25 and older with post-secondary

education) had been changed to the overarching goals of the University System. The metrics were accountability measures and there was ongoing discussion of how to develop strategies to achieve the metrics. He also pointed out that these could change over and after 10 years.

He pointed out that there would be mission differentiation by institution, but that all universities must provide comprehensive education plus programs of excellence. There was to be full utilization of facilities. The goal was to increase educational attainment in general, not in particular degrees (e.g., STEM). However, institutions must respond to economic and business needs.

Q: How would plan affect governance of individual universities?

A: The issue of institutional mergers in public discussions and the NEOU Commission deliberations was a collateral issue, separate from the University System. However, he elaborated that the Commission's recommendations regarding administrative and academic efficiencies were worth looking into, especially the administrative recommendations. There did not appear to be much of substance in the Commission's academic recommendations.

More specifically, rumors of a possible merger between UA and CSU had originated in discussions the Chancellor had had with others. The others had then reported these discussions to the media. The Chancellor had met with the BOTs and Presidents from the universities in northeast Ohio. These universities needed to differentiate their missions. There were four universities plus a medical school in four adjoining counties in an area of declining population. Furthermore, the combined research funding of the five institutions would not be in the top 200 universities in the U.S.

Q: Was there (would there be) enough money to meet enrollment goals?

A: They were doing 10 year financial projections. Most of the initial \$230K would be at the community college or regional campus level, since these institutions were less costly to attend. The University System was trying to develop goals without starting with the financing first.

Q: What was the role for global education in the University System?

A: They were looking at the number of international students. There was a desire to reward schools for attracting international students. But they also want to train Ohio students in global competencies, such as by studying abroad.

Q: How will the legislature respond to the goals and metrics of the University System?

A: The Chancellor and others involved in developing the University System would continue to work with the legislature. The plan was to be finished by March so that it could be included in the next budget. The Governor starts budget planning in August.

Q: Will the plan be “ground up” in the legislative process (altered in committee, etc.)?

A: Not the plan itself. The plan is not a legislative bill. The funding and any restructuring of universities will require legislative approval. For example the legislature would have to pass legislation if they wanted to allow out of state residents to serve on universities’ boards of trustees.

Q: How hard will it be to make colleges more affordable?

A: This was going to be challenging. They were trying to build a 10 year funding model that would provide universities with the long term financial assurances to get them to take risks. They would also encourage universities to obtain more funding from private sources.

Q: How would individual universities fit into the plan and funding models?

A: There will not be separate funding models for each institution, nor would there be one single funding model in which all universities must fit.

Dr. Cuppoletti thanked the chancellor. The Chancellor provided OFC members with an updated draft (12/14/07) of the University System document.

There was a brief follow up discussion among OFC members. Questions were raised about the roles of regional campuses. Concern was expressed about the lack of faculty input and consultation into the University System planning, as well as the issue of institutional consolidation and who decides.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Rudy Fenwick
Department of Sociology
The University of Akron
fenwick@uakron.edu

