Faculty Senate Monthly Packet January 1995

Portland State University Faculty Senate

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TO: Senators and Ex-officio Members to the Senate  
FROM: Sarah E. Andrews-Collier, Secretary to the Faculty  

The Faculty Senate will hold its regular meeting on **January 9, 1995**, at 3:00 p.m. in room 53 Cramer Hall  

**AGENDA**  

A. Roll  
B. Approval of the Minutes of the December 5, 1994, Meeting  
C. Announcements and Communications from the Floor  
   1. President's Report  
   2. Provost's Report  
D. Question Period  
   1. Questions for Administrators  
   2. Questions from the Floor for the Chair  
E. Reports from the Officers of Administration and Committees  
   1. Annual Report, Curriculum Committee - Bulman  
   2. IFS Report - Oshika  
   3. Four-credit Course System, University Planning Council & Curriculum Committee Report - Oshika, Crockett  
   4. Four-credit Course System, Graduate Council Report - Goslin  
F. Unfinished Business  
   1. Constitutional Amendment, Art. IV, Sec. 4, 4 (Budget Committee membership)  
   2. Constitutional Amendment, Art. IV, Sec. 4, 4 (University Planning Council membership)  
G. New Business  
   1. Proposal for Department of Architecture(SFPA), University Planning Council Recommendation - Oshika  
H. Adjournment  

The following documents are included with this mailing:  
B Minutes of the December 5, 1994, Senate Meeting  
E1 Curriculum Committee Annual Report  
E3 Four-credit Course System, University Planning Council & Curriculum Committee Report  
E4 Four-credit Course System, Graduate Council Report  
F1 Constitutional Amendment, Art. IV, Sec. 4, 4 (Budget Committee membership)  
F2 Constitutional Amendment, Art. IV, Sec. 4, 4 (University Planning Council membership)  
G1 Proposal for Dept. of Architecture(SFPA), University Planning Council Recommendation  

Secretary to the Faculty  
341 Cramer Hall  
(503)725-4416  
e-mail: sarah@po.pdx.edu
THE PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY FACULTY SENATE

(NOTE: Omissions in the minutes may have resulted due to recording difficulties)

Minutes: Faculty Senate Meeting, December 5, 1994
Presiding Officer: Loyde Hales
Secretary: Sarah E. Andrews-Collier


Alternates Present: Dusky for Abrams, Good for Ehrenhaus for Kosokoff, Wells for Lall, Wineberg for Seltzer.


B. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

The meeting was called to order at 3:15 p.m. by Loyde Hales. The Faculty Senate Minutes of November 7, 1994, were approved with the following corrections:

- Senators additionally noted as present at that meeting: Goldman
- Ex-officio members additionally noted as present at that meeting: Erzurumlu
- C.1. (p. 11) BRENNER stated the Intercollegiate Athletic Board will receive the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Big Sky Option and pass it on to the President with comments.
- E.1. (p. 12) TUFTS stated the final official headcount for Fall term is down .4%, not .04%.

C. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE FLOOR

HALES made the following announcements:
1. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

In reference to a correction of the minutes on the "Big Sky" Committee (see above), RAMALEY noted that she directed the committee to examine the impact of this option on the welfare of the university and its students, as well as the fiscal impact.

RAMALEY has distributed a letter regarding Measure #8 to the campus community, which she briefly outlined. The university continues to address the issue of Management Services personnel. The Attorney General has stated that if there is a contract in place, the implementation of Measure #8 will occur at the end of that contract. This provision applies for state employees represented by union or other contract. For Management Services personnel, there is no structure in place which is regarded as a contract between the State of Oregon and these employees. Measure #8 will take effect for this group and a handful of other employees on January 1, 1995. For most individuals at P.S.U., it will take effect June 30, 1995. Updates to this information will be provided on PSU INFO, "PSU Currently" and the "PSU Hotline."

A. JOHNSON asked how many retirements will take place as a result of Measure #8. RAMALEY yielded to DIMAN, who stated there will be approximately two to three faculty retiring. DIMAN urged individuals considering any change of circumstance to speak with PERS immediately before making any choices, as each case is unique. There was no information on other employees of the university. OSHIKA stated that the Attorney General's report is available on "Gopher," RAMALEY stated that FADM has copies available, and WOLLNER stated that AAUP has a copy.

A. JOHNSON asked about next year's budget. RAMALEY stated that there is provision in the preliminary budget request submitted to the Governor in May for 3% per year cost of living increases. The tuition increase of 9% per year in the next biennium is the primary challenge. The OSBHE's first priority is to reduce this tuition increase. There is also planning for salary adjustment for the next two years, and the budget request submitted in May, 1994, seeks a 3% per year pool for salary enhancements. LENDARIS asked what will be the Measure #5 cut, at this time. RAMALEY stated we anticipate a 13% decrease in State General Fund appropriations, but there is potential for this to be reduced due to changes in economic indicators since May.
BRENNER asked if there could be merit monies. RAMALEY stated we have lots of unrewarded productivity at Portland State at this point in time. LENDARIS asked if we could obtain salary increases in the interim, as "K-12" has done. RAMALEY stated our relationship with State government is different. Unless the Governor were willing to recommend an across the board adjustment, there is no possibility of change. The salary freeze in 1993-95 was a form of "buydown" to contain tuition costs. There is no reserve in our remaining budget, and it is not be possible to bargain the future when the Legislature has not approved a budget. A. JOHNSON asked if the 6% accrued from Measure #8 will to stay in our budget. RAMALEY stated the sponsors of Measure #8 assumed the monies would stay in the original budgets, but we don’t know that for a fact.

D. QUESTION PERIOD

There were no questions from the Floor to Administrators or to the Chair.

E. REPORTS

1. ANNUAL REPORT of the GRADUATE COUNCIL

FROST presented the Annual Report (E1). There were no questions. HALES accepted the report for the Senate.

2. ANNUAL REPORT of the LIBRARY COMMITTEE

BECKER presented the Annual Report (E2). BECKER also urged Senators to participate in the Adopt a Journal Program which is behind last year in revenues. BRENNER asked if there is an ethical issue if hard copies are donated as a result of the differential fees. ROHE stated hard copies are permissible and gift subscriptions have never been questioned by the IRS. Her recall is that in the past gift subscriptions have always been for journals with only one rate. HALES accepted the report for the Senate.

3. ANNUAL REPORT of the SCHOLASTIC STANDARDS COMMITTEE

CONSTANS presented the Annual Report. (E3), and directed the Senate to the recommendations attached on the reverse. HALES accepted the report for the Senate.

A. JOHNSON/ MOVED "the Senate approve the recommendations of the Scholastic Standards Committee: 1) That the cumulative GPA required for good standing at Portland State University be changed to 2.00 at 12 credit hours; and,
2) That the current usage of "academic warning" be changed to "academic probation."

BRENNER asked if the committee studied the impact of the proposed changes. CONSTANS said they worked closely with the Registrar and IASC. TUFTS stated that OIRP provided data which showed that one-third more students would be immediately disqualified, but that eventual results would be similar; the figures reflect the obsolescence of C as an average grade. The question was called.

The MOTION PASSED by unanimous voice vote.

4. QUARTERLY REPORT of the UNIVERSITY PLANNING COUNCIL

OSHlKA reported that the Council worked on four items of business this Fall, the 180 credit baccalaureate, the four-credit course system, the Department of Architecture proposal, and University District briefings by Vice President Desrochers and Facilities Director Brian Chase.

The first item is on the current agenda, and the following two will be on the 9 January Senate agenda. HALES accepted the report for the Senate.

5. SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT of the FACULTY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

BLEILER stated that applications for this year’s funding comprise 230% of resources available.

In response to the November Senate action relative to the committee, BLEILER stated that the committee will not discriminate against any academic areas due to availability of other funding.

The committee plan for the rest of the year in addition to determining awards, is to develop recommendations for institutional research accreditation, and next year’s calendar. The committee plans to propose an amendment to Article IV,4,g,2) of the Constitution to address the calendar difficulty resulting from last month’s Senate motion.

6. REPORT FROM THE INTERINSTITUTIONAL FACULTY SENATE MEETING

COOPER summarized the report of the 10 December meeting (attached to these minutes).

HALES accepted the report for the Senate.
BURNS called for a show of hands for Jack Cooper who he cited "has been an outstanding representative of Portland State University during his term as IFS Senator."

F. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. 180 CREDIT BACCALAUREATE DEGREE RECOMMENDATION

OSHIKA presented the reports of the University Planning Council and the Academic Requirements Committee (attached to these minutes) with their combined recommendations.

A. JOHNSON/BOWLDEN MOVED "the Senate approve the reduction of credits required for the baccalaureate degree to 180 credits."

WINEBERG asked for a rationale. OSHIKA stated that Writing and HPE deletions from the curriculum were one rationale for the recommendation of these two committees. REARDON stated we inherited our original curricular structure from Oregon, and they increased the original graduation requirement. In addition, the university is considering moving away from the "tuition plateau" and by implementing the credit hour change, the total cost of the degree will be reduced.

The question was called.

The MOTION PASSED by voice vote, forty-three in favor, one opposed.

LENDARIS asked when this change would take effect. REARDON stated it would be desirable the change be retroactive to this date.

LENDARIS/GRECO MOVED "the reduction of credits required for the baccalaureate degree to 180 credits be implemented immediately." The question was called.

The MOTION PASSED by unanimous voice vote.

2. CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT - ART.IV, SEC.4.4, BUDGET COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP.

OSHIKA reported that the Advisory Council approved the language for two constitutional amendments referred to the Council on 14 November by the Senate. She noted there was concern that a burden on All Other faculty would result in adding representation of this group to University Planning Council; however, the
new "faculty" composition will increase this division.

A. JOHNSON/MOVED "to table the two proposed amendments until the January 1995 Senate meeting." The question was called

The MOTION PASSED by unanimous voice vote.

G. NEW BUSINESS

1. CURRICULUM COMMITTEE AND GRADUATE COUNCIL COURSE AND PROGRAM PROPOSALS

BULMAN presented the remaining Undergraduate course proposals (G1).

A.JOHNSON/BRENNER MOVED "the Senate approve the proposed Undergraduate New Courses and Course Changes-Part 2, effective Fall 1995(G1)." The question was called.

The MOTION PASSED by unanimous voice vote.

FROST presented the proposal for the Master of International Management (MIM) program (see E1).

LENDARIS asked if the program would be self-supporting. FROST yielded the floor to John Oh, SBA, who stated that tuition will be low initially, but will be raised. LENDARIS asked if the Board has purchased the Walker Road site. Oh replied yes. The question was called.

The MOTION PASSED by unanimous voice vote.

FROST presented Graduate course proposals (G1).

A. JOHNSON/FOSQUE MOVED "the Senate approve the proposed Graduate New Courses and Course Changes-Part 1 (G1, November 1994) and Part 2 (G1), effective Fall 1995." The question was called.

The MOTION PASSED by unanimous voice vote.

2. MEASURE 8

OSHIKA introduced this agenda item on behalf of University Planning Council, who proposed that the Senate address Measure #8. She also urged Senators to attend the State Board meeting in Portland on Friday, 16 December.
WOLLNER/FRANKS MOVED that:

"WHEREAS the salaries of faculty in the Oregon State System of Higher Education are far below the national average for comparable institutions and for some ranks at some institutions are in the bottom twenty percent; WHEREAS even without the passage of Measure #8, budget projections issued by Governor-elect Kitzhaber will accelerate the downward spiral of salaries; WHEREAS in light of the passage of Measure #8, the spendable income of faculty adjusted for inflation will be up to 30 percent lower in 1999 than it was two years ago; THE PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY FACULTY SENATE requests that the Oregon State Board of Higher Education and the Chancellor act decisively and immediately to partially mitigate the rapidly deteriorating financial status of faculty by granting a six percent across-the-board cost-of-living salary adjustment, with the six percent to be treated as dedicated funds obtained from salary to be used to pay faculty contributions to PERS (or any other appropriate pension plan used by faculty members). Further, we request that an attempt to be made to accomplish this action before the end of business on 7 December 1994, but no later than 31 December 1994."

COOPER stated the motion was weak because it was clearly futile; it is a profession of weakness to urge the Board to do something they can't do. We must accept "8" as fact. WOLLNER replied that he agrees with COOPER, but there are supporters of the motion her presented.

BRENNER stated some parts of the motion were too obvious, but the crisis still warrants a strong statement from the Senate.

COOPER/LENDARIS MOVED that:

"WHEREAS the salaries of faculty in the Oregon State System of Higher Education are far below the national average for comparable institutions and for some ranks at some institutions are in the bottom twenty percent; WHEREAS even without the passage of Measure #8, budget projections issued by Governor-elect Kitzhaber will accelerate the downward spiral of salaries; WHEREAS tuition in the Oregon State System of Higher Education has been raised to a level beyond what many eligible Oregonians can afford; WHEREAS the Oregon State System of Higher Education has had to eliminate a net of eighty educational programs, thus reducing educational opportunities to Oregonians; WHEREAS the State of Oregon has reduced its funding of public higher education for 1994-95 more than any other state; THEREFORE the Portland State University Faculty Senate calls on the Governor-elect and the Oregon State legislature to give priority to increasing the funding of Oregon State System of

PSU Faculty Senate, Dec. 5, 1994
Higher Education in order to make faculty salaries nationally competitive and the compensation of staff just, and to provide access to a high quality higher education to qualified students."

COOPER stated his motive for removing the original third "Whereas" was the President's comments in the meeting earlier. WOLLNER agreed, that he was not aware of this information at the time he prepared the motion.

WOLLNER/FRANKS withdrew their motion.

SVOBODA asked where Cooper obtained his statistics. COOPER said they were from "The Chronicle", in which we were listed as 49th of 49 for state funding (with Mass. not reporting), and Vice Chancellor Shirley Clark, who provided the figure of "eighty eliminated programs."

The question was called.

The MOTION PASSED by unanimous voice vote.

H. ADJOURNMENT

HALES adjourned the meeting at 4:50, and invited those present for refreshments at "K" House.
University Curriculum Committee
Annual Report to the Faculty Senate
January 1995

Members: Teresa Bulman (Chair, CLAS), Leah Bosell (ASPSU), Deborah Kubichek (ASPSU), David Crockett (SBA), David Holloway (CLAS), Paul Latiolais (CLAS), Cheryl Livneh (SES), Andrew Tolmach (EAS), Marjorie Terdal (CLAS), Liz Wolsey-George (ED), Emily Young (SFPA), Jerome DeGraaff (LIB), Pauline Jivanjee (SSW), Gerard Mildner (USP)
Consultant: Linda Devereaux (OAA)

Procedures: The committee functioned as it had in previous years (see Report to Faculty Senate December 7, 1992)

Policy: There has been some confusion in the past concerning course requirements for courses offered at the 400/500 levels. In order to alleviate the confusion, the committee adopted a general policy that course proposals for 400/500 level courses must contain a statement identifying how the course requirements for undergraduates will differ from those for graduates.

Curricular actions: The committee approved new courses and course changes as described in the committee's reports to the Faculty Senate on November 7th, 1994 and December 5th, 1994.

The following program changes were approved: Biology Program (changes necessitated by course changes); Public Health Education program (changes required due to elimination of one course); Theatre Arts (program changes necessitated by changes in course offerings); minor in Environmental Engineering; and revision of undergraduate program in the School of Business Administration.

The following program changes were not approved: School of Engineering and Applied Science - EAS proposed program changes in order to bring the catalogue descriptions of programs into line with the new general education requirements. However, since it was not clear which requirements would apply to which entering students, the proposal was sent back to EAS for revision.

Other Action: In March, the Faculty Senate asked the UCC to consider a pilot program in the English Department relating to the proposed conversion from three-credit to four-credit course system. The pilot program was approved (see minutes of Faculty Senate meeting of April 4, 1994). In October the committee was asked to begin deliberations for a report to the Faculty Senate Steering Committee on the curricular impacts of the proposed conversion from a three-credit to a four-credit course system. A preliminary report is due in mid-December, and the committee is coordinating its deliberations with the Academic Requirements Committee, the Graduate Council, and the University Planning Council.

Unfinished business: In November the UCC received documentation related to two new university programs (Science in the Liberal Arts and Environmental Studies). Because these proposals were several months late arriving at the committee, and because the UCC is a calendar-year committee, we were not able to complete our review of these programs. They will placed as the first items on the agenda of the new committee in January.
To: Faculty Senate  
From: University Planning Council  
Beatrice Oshika, Chair x5-4141  
Subj: 3 to 4 credit conversion of undergraduate courses  

December 11, 1994

In Fall94, the Senate Steering Committee referred consideration of an OAA proposal to change the base for undergraduate courses from 3 credit hours to 4 credit hours to the Academic Requirements Committee, Curriculum Committee, Graduate Council and University Planning Council. The chairs of these committees, Sandra Rosengrant (ARC), Teresa Bulman (Curriculum), Dean Frost (Graduate Council) and Oshika (UPC) have met regularly to exchange progress reports on their committees' discussion of this issue. However, each committee is working independently toward its own conclusions.

The OAA proposal suggested that possible advantages of such a change would be greater faculty productivity (fewer course preparations per year), more coherent curriculum (fewer courses but more depth), and smoother flow of students toward degrees (fewer but more focused choices).

UPC discussion: There was general agreement that productivity, if measured by increased number of SCH/faculty, reduced time for students to get degrees, and fewer course preparations for faculty, could be increased. Departments already on a 4-credit course base, such as EE, said curriculum is more coherent when organized into a smaller set of courses with increased depth within each course. There was considerable concern about the tradeoff between breadth of education (large number of class choices) and depth (amount of time in class), particularly for lower division students who should be encouraged to explore.

Scheduling and logistics issues were raised. Night classes might meet twice a week, increasing trips to campus and parking congestion, because a single four hour block was pedagogically unsound and would also end at a time when buses had ceased to run frequently. It was suggested that 4 credit classes could be scheduled on MW or TTh 2-hr blocks, leaving Fri more available for short courses, community workshops, meetings, etc. It was also noted that 4 credit classes were consistent with conversion to a semester system, but semester planning should not be used as a deciding criterion. The question of teaching load was also raised: teaching an annual 7 courses, for example, on a 3-2-2 schedule, might open the door to an argument that faculty could teach on a 3-3-3 schedule.

UPC Action: After extensive review of the issues, UPC agrees that the proposed conversion is feasible and recommends that the Faculty Senate proceed with implementation of 3-to-4 credit conversion of undergraduate courses, with explicit attention to the following policy and implementation provisos:

a) So many graduate courses are offered in tandem with 400-level courses that a change in undergraduate course credits has immediate impact on graduate programs. In order to unify courses and ease scheduling, UPC suggests that departments and programs evaluate their courses and requirements, and assess the effect of 4-credit conversion on graduate offerings.

b) UPC respects the autonomy of departments and disciplines in structuring their curriculum, and wants to ensure that program requirements drive the assignment of course credit, such that there is flexibility within the notion of 'typical' course credit.

c) A policy is necessary to clarify the assignment of course credits to a class, including factors such as in-class and out-of-class activities, course type, and any other factors as appropriate.

d) Using a base of 4 credits instead of 3 will change all kinds of requirements and definitions, e.g., what is a full-time student, what is permissible load for post-bac students, what are requirements for departmental majors, etc. These implications must be dealt with in a complete and consistent way.
November 23, 1994

To: Faculty Senate
From: Graduate Council
      Dean E. Frost, Chair x5-3965
Re: Conversion to a Four Credit Hour Standard Course

At the March 1994 Faculty Senate meeting, Provost Reardon asked the Faculty Senate to formally initiate a discussion of the implications of changing undergraduate courses from a three credit hour standard course to four credit hour standard course. During Fall 1994, the Faculty Senate Steering Committee requested that the Graduate Council consider this proposal and its implications for graduate instruction at PSU.

After an extensive discussion of the proposal the Graduate Council passed the following motion:

"We do not support mandatory conversion of graduate courses to a four credit hour standard at the current time and we emphasize the need for flexibility and autonomy for individual graduate programs."

This motion passed unanimously.
AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION OF THE PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY FACULTY

We, the ten undersigned members of the PSU Faculty Senate, present to the PSU Faculty Senate the following Amendment to the constitution of the Portland State University Faculty.

Text to be deleted is struck out. Text to be added is underlined.

ARTICLE IV. Organization of the Faculty.
4) Standing Committees and Their Functions.
   1) Budget Committee. This committee shall consist of five faculty members from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, one from each of the professional schools, one from the Library, one from The School of Extended Studies, one representing All Other faculty, two students, the chairperson of the University Planning Council and, as consultants, each of the following or his or her representative: the Vice President for Finance and Administration, the Provost, and the University Budget Director. The chairperson (or a designated member) shall serve on the University Planning Council. The Committee shall: ...

October 10, 1994

AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION OF THE PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY FACULTY

We, the ten undersigned members of the PSU Faculty Senate, present to the PSU Faculty Senate the following Amendment to the constitution of the Portland State University Faculty.

Text to be deleted is struck out. Text to be added is underlined.

ARTICLE IV. Organization of the Faculty.
4) Standing Committees and Their Functions.
   m) University Planning Council. The University Planning Council shall advise the Faculty Senate and the President on educational policies and planning for the University. Membership of the Council shall be composed of the chairperson of the Budget Committee, plus five faculty members from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, one faculty member from each of the professional schools, one faculty member from the Library, one faculty member from the School of Extended Studies, one faculty member representing All Other faculty, one Management Services person, one classified person, and two students (one undergraduate and one graduate). The chairperson shall be selected from the membership by the Committee on Committees. The Provost, the Budget Director, and a representative from the Office of Institutional Research and Planning shall serve as consultants at the request of the Council. The chairperson (or a designated member) shall serve on the Budget Committee. The Council shall: ...

October 10, 1994
In October 1994, The University Planning Council received a proposal from OAA re establishing a Department of Architecture within FPA in support of the joint two-year UO/PSU Master of Architecture program. One of the primary motivations for establishing a new department is a requirement by the National Architecture Accrediting Board (NAAB) that an accredited program have an autonomous architecture unit within the institution. The motivation for seeking accreditation is the new joint PSU/UO Master of Architecture located currently on the PSU campus effective Fall 1994. Funding for the proposed new department is covered largely, but not entirely, by funds from the Chancellor’s Office for the new joint MA pledged for the 1994-95 academic year plus the 1995-97 biennium.

There was considerable discussion by UPC on two main issues. One was the need for a department per se, rather than another organizational structure that might ensure autonomy of the architecture program as required by the NAAB, e.g., an architecture program within the current Art department, with a separate Architecture budget. Barbara Sestak, likely chair of the proposed department, said it is her understanding of the NAAB accrediting requirements that if the architecture effort is in an institution that has professional schools (PSU has FPA, SBA etc), and if the school has departments (FPA has Art, TA, etc), then Architecture must be represented as a department. In a later conversation, the executive director of NAAB indicated there is no currently accredited architecture program which co-exists within another department.

A UPC member spoke with someone at NAAB and got an interpretation that autonomy had to be ensured, e.g., represented by a separate budget and budget authority, but a separate department was not required although it was more desirable than no separate department. It appears that the guidelines that were discussed in that conversation are proposed guidelines (as opposed to current ones in effect) that are being reviewed by NAAB programs. If approved they would not be in effect until 1996.

According to FPA Dean Toscan, accreditation depends on a package of factors: faculty, curriculum, organization, etc, which are weighed variously. It is to the advantage of the PSU program to submit the strongest possible package, and be believes a departmental structure strengthens the argument.

An effect of a department is that it gives the PSU architecture program closer-to-similar status to the UO program (which is represented as a department within a School of Design like a PSU program would be represented by a department within the School of FPA).

The second major issue had to do with the process of review the proposal has gone through. UPC wished to ensure that units with related interests and curricular contributions, such as UPA and Civil Engineering, and also the faculty in the Art department, from which the Architecture department faculty would be drawn, had been consulted. Further inquiry indicated that UPA had reviewed the proposal and that UPA Dean Toulan had indicated support for the proposed department in a memo to Dean Toscan. The Advisory Committee of the Art department, made up of elected faculty representatives, also contacted UPC and indicated it had reviewed the NAAB language regarding accreditation and it believed the establishment of an Architecture department was the correct way to meet the accreditation requirements.

UPC Action: After considerable review of the issues and consultation with interested faculty, UPC recommends that the proposal for a Department of Architecture be approved, with the requirement that collaboration and communication with faculty and programs with related interests be maintained.
To: Faculty Senate
From: University Planning Council
Beatrice T. Oshika, Chair x5-4141
Subj: 180 Credit Baccalaureate Degree

November 14, 1994

In Fall94, the Senate Steering Committee referred consideration of the proposal to reduce credit hours for a baccalaureate degree from the current 186 credits to 180 credits to the Academic Requirements Committee, the Curriculum Committee and the University Planning Council. The chairs of those committees, Teresa Bulman (Curriculum), Sandra Rosengrant (ARC) and Oshika (UPC) met in October and determined that ARC and UPC would take primary responsibility for this task because curricular content issues were not materially affected by this proposal. The chairs have met since then to exchange information, but ARC and UPC have discussed the issues independently.

Separately, the two committees have approved the proposal to reduce the required credits from 186 to 180 (ARC report is on reverse page). Because Writing and HPE requirements have already been eliminated, the reduced credit requirement appears to have no significant negative impact on majors or distribution requirements. The change is consistent with other OSSHE institutions, such as UO, and with national norms (e.g., UCalifornia, UMinnesota, UWashington).

Both committees expressed concern that this change is being considered in a situation of flux -- the General Education requirements are changing, there is discussion of conversion of undergraduate courses from a base of 3 credits to 4 credits, and there is even discussion of a possible change to a semester system. Everyone agrees it would be more efficient to deal with these issues in a unified and consistent manner since they are so related. However, we understand that the probability of these factors becoming stable and 'real' in the same time period is very low, and therefore we are willing to make this first step.

We recommend that the Faculty Senate approve the reduction of credits required for the baccalaureate degree from 186 to 180.
November 1, 1994

To: Faculty Senate

From: Sandra Rosengrant, ARC

Re: 180 Credit Baccalaureate Degree

The Academic Requirements Committee, together with the University Planning Council and the Curriculum Committee, has been asked to evaluate the proposal that the minimum number of credits required for graduation be reduced from 186 to 180.

The Committee considered a number of arguments both in support of and in opposition to the proposal. The most persuasive argument in its favor was the reduction in the total number of hours required for Health and Physical Education. Because the number of hours required for Health and Physical Education has been reduced, it seems reasonable that the total minimum number of hours required for graduation can also be reduced without undue risk of devaluing the Bachelor's Degree. Our greatest concern at this point is that the overall level of achievement represented by a degree from Portland State University not be reduced or impaired in any way. The total number of hours required for graduation should be within national norms and should be capable of completion within four years by a student carrying a full academic load. The number 180 seems to meet both requirements.

The Committee would like to express its concern about the timing of this change. Other changes that have already been implemented (the new General Education Requirement) or that now are being considered (the conversion to a 4-hour standard) may eventually produce patterns that lead us to regard another total number as more appropriate to our circumstances. It may in the long run be more efficient to make a decision on this proposal after resolving the other issues that are currently under consideration.