

Minutes of an ordinary meeting of the CEU Academic Senate

26 February 2005

Present: Judit Bodnar, Nitsan Chorev, Yehuda Elkana (*chair*), Julius Horvath, Zdenek Kudrna, Laszlo Matyas, Liviu Matei (*ex officio, non-voting*), Howard Robinson, Istvan Teplán,

Not present: Janos Kis, Diana Urge-Vorsatz, Tibor Varady

In attendance: Janos Amrik, Zsuzsanna Szunyogh, Szilvia Cszaszar

Minutes: Pusa Nastase

Yehuda Elkana formally introduced the new Chief Finance Officer, Janos Amrik, to the Senate.

1. Approval of the agenda

Liviu Matei proposed to discuss the two student issues of the agenda together and to invite Seth Weeldon, the Chair of the Student Council, for the discussion of these issues. With this amendment the agenda was unanimously approved as submitted.

2. Approval of the minutes

The minutes were unanimously approved as submitted.

3. Approval of validators

Julius Horvath and Zdenek Kudrna volunteered as validators.

4. Rector's report

Yehuda Elkana reported that it was the first time when a budget proposal with a deficit would be presented to the Board. He explained that throughout the years the financial problem generated by the fact that natural growth is not covered by the endowment was solved by making adjustments to different various budget categories, such as the Summer University School, or by attracting more money from fee-paying students.

The financial difficulties which CEU is experiencing at present are caused by several factors:

- the depreciation of the U.S. Dollar led to a loss of about EUR 0.5 million. This had occurred despite the Chairman's generous move in 2003 to change the disbursements from the endowment to 15 million EUR and 5 million USD per year, and respectively USD, due to the fact that the structure of spending in EUR and USD has changed further since that time.
- Although no new unit was established, CEU now has higher costs due to an increase of the general salary levels and also to the high number of promotions. The Rector emphasized that he is satisfied with the significantly increased number of quality publications by the faculty in the last year and explained that this led to

- more than 30 faculty members being promoted. Naturally, the promotions also had an impact on the university budget.
- There had been a practice at CEU whereby some departments relied heavily on visiting professors. This is no longer possible because in the context of the Hungarian accreditation the number of full time professors increased significantly. Independent of the Hungarian accreditation, the Board had also asked the improvement of the ratio of resident faculty as a way to strengthen doctoral studies. Thus each department now has more permanent faculty and fewer visiting professors.
 - The CEU Rt. had to raise the rent CEU pays for the space it uses because their income had also decreased and they are not permitted to make a loss. OSI used to be a reliable client of the Rt. by renting many rooms in the Kerepesi Center, but, since OSI's operations had been scaled down, the occupancy rate in the Center had decreased.

Yehuda Elkana also outlined the positive developments such as:

- the fact that CEU's income from other sources had increased; non-endowment sources now represent 15% of the total income, as opposed to less than 5% when the endowment was established
- CEU managed to attract more paying students (for 2005/2006 CEU will have 30 full time equivalent paying students)
- George Soros expressed his intention to help mitigate the effect of the exchange rate

Yehuda Elkana informed the Senate that at present potential ways of addressing the financial difficulties could be:

- introducing registration fees
- having undergraduate programs with other universities
- having departments that have only paying students.

He explained that these issues would be discussed at the meetings of the Finance Committee, and of the Board, in March.

5. Student Council proposal regarding student academic rights policy and Student Council memorandum regarding computer network issues

Invited: Seth Wheeldon, Chair of the Student Council

Seth Wheeldon explained that the Student Council would like to request the establishment by the Senate of a Committee mandated to prepare a CEU Charter of Student Academic Rights. The membership of the Senate Committee is proposed to be tripartite, with equal and proportionate representation of faculty, administration and students.

Liviu Matei noted that the Senate had already established a Committee that deals with such issues -- the Quality Assurance Committee. Laszlo Matyas agreed that the concerns of the Students Council needed to be tackled by the Quality Assurance Committee and indicated that the Committee should invite other members as proposed by the Student Council.

The Senate endorsed the Pro-Rector's suggestion to defer the Student Council's proposal to the Quality Assurance Committee. The Senate recommended that the Committee should report to the Senate by May 1, 2005 with regard to the progress made.

Zdenek Kudrna expressed the dissatisfaction of the student community with CEU's computer system and policies and made an appeal to the Senate to take action to improve the situation. He mentioned that the problems are both of a technical nature (such as the very limited mailbox space) and also of communication with ITSU.

Laszlo Matyas said that there were two committees that currently dealt with issues related to the computer system: a Senate Computer Committee and a similar one at the CEU Rt.

Liviu Matei said that in his view the Senate Committee was best suited to tackling these problems and suggested that the Chair of the Committee could invite more students and ITSU staff members to take part in the meetings.

Nitsan Chorev, Chair of the Senate Computer Committee, asked for clarification regarding the mandate of the Senate Computer Committee. Liviu Matei explained that the Committee was entitled to advise the Senate and the administration as to what the policies were to be adopted and specific actions taken for ensuring adequate computing services for the CEU community.

The Rector suggested that the Computer Committee give the Senate a detailed report on these issues as soon as possible and promised that the Planning and Budget Committee would deal immediately with the suggestions for improving the computer system. The Senate endorsed this suggestion.

At Zdenek Kudrna's suggestion the Senate voted to have two more students and one staff member added to the Computer Committee.

6. Business School update

Ferenc Partos briefed the Senate about the most recent developments at the GSB:

- The School made progress in establishing the dual degree program with Bocconi University and the advertising had started.
- The accreditation proposal was being prepared and would be submitted to the New York Regents at some point in spring 2005.
- The Course outline had not been submitted yet because a few CEU departments could not submit the materials in time.
- The School was scheduled to move temporarily into a new building until the School's premises on Nador 15 were renovated.
- Three additional faculty members joined the GSB (they will teach both at the undergraduate and postgraduate programs)

Julius Horvath noted that since the GSB is the first CEU entity to enroll undergraduate students, the other units who plan to do the same in the future could benefit from the School's experience in recruitment and advertising.

Yehuda Elkana supported Julius Horvath's comment and noted that the undergraduate program will require certain changes. For instance, student services will have to extend the scope of their work. Moreover, in terms of academic autonomy, the extent to which the undergraduate program is fully integrated into CEU or is independent with full academic control, needed to be clarified.

Yehuda Elkana informed the Senate that Lajos Bokros (teaching now full time at CEU) had been appointed Senior Vice President in charge of coordinating special projects of non-teaching units and acting as Chairman of the Advisory Council of the GSB and of the Center for Policy Studies.

Nitsan Chorev inquired who would teach other classes aside from the strictly business ones at GSB and suggested that PhD students could be given the opportunity to teach in this context.

Liviu Matei answered that this question was yet to be addressed and noted that the final program description would be sent out soon. He also indicated that the GSB had difficulties in getting feedback from CEU faculty on this topic.

Laszlo Matyas underlined that at present CEU has full academic control over the GSB.

7. Evaluation report of the Nationalism Studies Program and revisiting the concept of Interdisciplinary Programs as a CEU academic unit

Yehuda Elkana explained that according to a standing Senate decision, interdisciplinary programs should be discontinued. One of the two existing programs, the Program on Gender and Culture, had become the Gender Studies Department. Regarding the other one, the Nationalism Studies Program, the Senate had decided that it should be integrated into a department. An independent expert was asked to undertake an evaluation of the program and make recommendations as to which department the NSP could be best integrated into. John Breuilly, a professor from the LSE, argued at the end of the review that the NSP was best to be left as a program instead of being integrated into a department. He suggested that:

- So far as the MA program was concerned the NSP should remain autonomous and it should not be incorporated into any other department;
- For the purposes of doctoral research the NSP should be considered as a specific track or department within the departments of history, political science, and sociology & social anthropology.
- NSP should not be turned into an independent department in its own right.

The Rector stated John Breuilly's recommendation indicated that it might be valuable to have interdisciplinary programs and there is no need to discontinue them. However, the concept of interdisciplinary program needed to be re-thought to allow for the effective work of such programs. The regulations regarding interdisciplinary programs as academic units could be so changed that such programs would make a real contribution to promoting interdisciplinarity at CEU and help to open up existing departments. In addition, it was difficult to imagine that topics such as comparative religion would be undertaken within the framework of a department: it therefore appears more appropriate to think of an interdisciplinary program instead. The same

could apply to Jewish Studies. He announced that a formal proposal in this regard would be prepared and brought for discussion in the Forum and the Senate.

8. Report by the Chair of the Curriculum Committee

Howard Robinson reported that establishing a Curriculum Committee had been previously pursued by the university and also endorsed by the Middle States Association report. The Committee is mandated to oversee various syllabi and curriculum, to advise departments on cross-listed courses and to analyze whether the curricula reflect the university's interdisciplinary ambitions.

The Chair of the Curriculum Committee mentioned that at the first meeting it was decided that during the present academic meeting the Committee would analyze the syllabi for each department and make recommendations for the next academic year.

9. Hungarian accreditation – status report

The Academic Pro-Rector explained that the departments would need to start preparing the MA accreditation materials. He also mentioned that at present CEU has two sets of university regulations (for both the American and the Hungarian entity) that are occasionally contradictory but will need to be harmonized. As result of the Hungarian accreditation process, an Institutional Council was created, consisting of the Board and the Senate members. The Council is mandated, as explained earlier, and among other things, to make proposals for the appointments of Hungarian university professors (*egyetemi tanar*).

Summing up, he said that the decision of the Hungarian Accreditation Committee (MAB) was expected on that very day but there were indications that it would be favorable.

10. Academic Pro-Rector election

Laszlo Matyas was invited to leave the room

The Rector explained that the Academic Pro-Rector's first term expires in July 2005 and warmly recommended Laszlo Matyas for reappointment for a new two-year term. He justified his recommendation by saying that Laszlo Matyas had shown commitment to CEU and had put a great deal of work both into the Hungarian accreditation process and his regular duties as a Pro-Rector.

By means of a secret vote, the Senate unanimously approved the Rector's proposal to re-appoint Laszlo Matyas as the Academic Pro-Rector until July 2007.