Ohio University Faculty Senate  
Monday, January 9, 2017  
Margaret M. Walter Hall, Room 135, 7:10pm  
Meeting Summary

MEETING AGENDA
I. Associate Provost Howard Dewald
II. Roll Call and Approval of the December 5, 2016 Minutes
III. Chair’s Report – Joe McLaughlin
   - Updates and Announcements
   - Policy Review – Faculty Initiation of Proposals & Faculty Initiated Referendum (*Faculty Handbook* VI.B.6-7)
   - Upcoming Senate Meeting: February 6, 2017, 7:10PM, Walter Hall 235
IV. Executive Committee – Joe McLaughlin
   a. Sense of the Senate Resolution on Senate Bill 199—First Reading
V. Faculty Initiated Proposal on DACA and Adding Immigration Status as a Protected Category Under the Harassment Policy—Discussion and Vote
VI. Finance & Facilities Committee – Susan Williams
VII. Promotion & Tenure Committee – Ben Bates
VIII. Professional Relations Committee – Sherrie Gradin
IX. Educational Policy & Student Affairs Committee – Charles Buchanan
X. New Business
XI. Adjournment

Meeting called to order by Joe McLaughlin (Faculty Senate Chair) at 7:10PM

I. Associate Provost Howard Dewald

- **Topic 1: Dean Evaluations.** Dewald stated that Dean Evaluations are in-process. This year, there are more Dean Evaluations than usual; 16 are scheduled. More than 80 full-time faculty will be involved as members of the committees. Dewald thanked faculty and all involved for their service and support. This year’s process started earlier in the academic calendar as compared to previous years; orientation is planned for late January (or early February). Like previous years, the process will verify the lists of Group 1 and Group 2 faculty so that questionnaires can be distributed to faculty members. Questions will be designed by institutional research and the committees. Dewald noted that there are more comprehensive reviews this year as compared to previous years (i.e., seven comprehensive evaluations). Some “non-traditional” Deans are being evaluated for the first time (e.g., Regional Higher Education Executive Dean Bill Willan and Dean of Graduate College Joe Shields). For these Deans, the typical questions asked may not be appropriate, so there will need to be some additional consideration of these questions. Dewald thanked Joe McLaughlin for his input about these committees. Faculty should expect to receive questionnaires via e-mail before Spring Break. The process is likely to finish by the end of March or early April.
Topic 2: State of Ohio Initiatives. Dewald discussed several initiatives in development at the state-level including:

- **College-level examination program (CLEP).** The State of Ohio is re-evaluating scores necessary to earn credit through CLEP. The process will identify minimum scores necessary to earn credit. Minimum scores will vary by examination. Determination of scores is being done in consultation with faculty panels in the examination disciplines.

- **General Education.** Ohio’s Department of Higher Education issued a white paper during the fall semester about general education. Discussions have included topics such as defining general education, connecting general education to transfer policies, and considering issues associated with competency-based education.

- **Transfer.** By the end of this calendar year, all four-year institutions must have **guaranteed transfer pathways.** This will establish statewide guaranteed transfer pathways from two-year to four-year degree programs in an equivalent field. This initiative is related to Ohio’s other initiatives regarding affordability and degree completion. Dewald noted that OHIO is well positioned already with existing transfer pathways. Given that faculty are responsible for the curriculum, there will be need faculty input to establish additional pathways. Currently, discussions have started with assistant deans and associate deans from various colleges.

- **Efficiency Reports.** The Ohio Department of Higher Education is reviewing information, suggestions, and ideas from the submitted efficiency reports. One of the topics being discussed is duplicate programs including programs at different universities, within the same university at different campuses, and at co-located campuses.

- **Transfer Assurance Guides (TAG).** As usual, there will be reviews of TAG definitions, descriptions, course content, etc. For example, there has been a recent review of laboratory science courses. One topic of discussion has been the extent to which a virtual lab course can (or should) substitute for a physical lab. OHIO faculty have been part of these discussions.

Questions and Discussions

- None

II. Roll Call and Approval of the December 5, 2016 Minutes

- Roll call (Hartman)
- Minutes were approved by a voice vote.

III. Chair’s Report (Joe McLaughlin)

- Topic 1: Updates and Announcements
  - **Signed Resolution.** Provost Benoit has signed the Senate Resolution to Revise Credit Hours for Certificates.
  - **Faculty Senate Elections.** The call for nominations for Faculty Senators for 2017-18 will be circulated mid-February. Elections are typically done before the April meeting. As such, it is not too early to think about nominations and re-elections. Given that next year will be the first year for the next president, it will be an important year for strong participation from the Faculty Senate.
  - **Board of Trustees Meeting.** The OHIO Board of Trustees January meeting will be Thursday, January 19 and Friday, January 20. The agenda can be found online at [https://www.ohio.edu/trustees/agendas/index.cfm](https://www.ohio.edu/trustees/agendas/index.cfm).
o **Interim President.** It is expected that the Board of Trustees will discuss this during the January meeting. McLaughlin indicated that the interim president may be announced during the meetings or shortly thereafter.

o **President Search Finalists.** The four finalists have been announced; dates for visits are January 10, January 12, January 13, and January 17. Public open forums have been scheduled for every candidate between 4:30PM – 6:30PM for each of the dates. McLaughlin noted that people across campus are sharing information and having conversations – both in-person and on social media – about perceptions, ideas, and opinions. McLaughlin encouraged faculty to share opinions with the Board of Trustees at trustees@ohio.edu. McLaughlin welcomed emails or phone calls from faculty who might not want to share with the Board of Trustees directly; he volunteered to share them anonymously through the Faculty Senate. McLaughlin also encouraged faculty to share opinions even if they think that the opinion is repetitive; repetition reinforces ideas.

❖ **Topic 2: Policy Review – Faculty Invitation of Proposals & Faculty Initiated Referendum (Faculty Handbook VI.B.6-7)**

o McLaughlin reviewed two sub-sections of the Faculty Handbook: Faculty Initiation Proposals (VI.B.6) and Faculty Initiation of Referendums (VI.B.7). McLaughlin discussed the similarities, differences, and procedures.

o Please refer to Appendix A for a full-text copy of the policy.

❖ **Topic 3: Upcoming Senate Meeting:** Monday, February 6, 2017

Questions and Discussions
• None

IV. Executive Committee (Joe McLaughlin)
❖ **Sense of the Senate Resolution on Senate Bill 199—First Reading**

The sense of the senate resolution was offered by Executive Committee asking the Board of Trustees to take no action regarding the State of Ohio Senate Bill 199 (House Bill 48), a law that will allow permit holders to carry concealed firearms on college and university campuses, if the boards of trustees choose to allow them. Taking no action reaffirms Ohio University’s commitment to a weapon free campus.

o Please refer to Appendix B for the full-text of the resolution.
  o A senator moved to waive the second reading, seconded by another senator. Motion to waive second reading was approved by a show of hands by a vote of 41 to 5.
  o A senator offered a friendly amendment to change the language from “in instructional spaces and faculty offices” to “on our campuses.” The Resolution language was modified accordingly.

✔ Sense of the Senate Resolution was passed by a voice vote (with approvals and dissents).

Questions and Discussions
• A senator asked about why the Resolution language asks the Board of Trustees to “take no action” instead of asking the Board to take a specific action. Chair McLaughlin noted that there was discussion among the Executive Committee about how to word the Resolution. The committee agreed that asking the Board to “take no action” allowed the Board to not take up the issue at all. Taking no action maintains the OHIO’s current policies. Senator Amy White added
that the Resolution language matches the language of the Bill. McLaughlin emphasized that the current language allows for a non-confrontational mechanism to achieve the same results.

- A guest asked if there had been efforts to solicit the opinions of students. OHIO Student Senate President Hannah Clouser stated that the OHIO Student Senate is planning to solicit information from students (via a survey) as well as plans a Referendum.

- Executive Dean for Regional Higher Education Bill Willan asked the Clouser if the Student Senate planned to also survey students from Regional Higher Education campuses. Clouser indicated that this was not considered because RHE students are not eligible to vote on the Referendum. Willan asked the student if the Student Senate would be open to finding a way to ask students from RHE campuses. Clouser said yes.

- McLaughlin reminded the Faculty Senate that there are plans university-wide to seek input from a variety of stakeholders including staff, students, and faculty. The committee deliberately focused on faculty in the Resolution given the nature of the Sense of the Senate Resolution. However, this is likely to be only one effort to share information with the Board of Trustees.

- A senator asked Ohio University Police Chief Andrew Powers about opinions, challenges, or otherwise concerns about students carrying concealed on campus. Powers indicated that law enforcement officers are trained to always assume that individuals could be armed – even if they are on campus. Even under conditions in which policy indicates that weapons are not permitted, law enforcement officers must assume the possibility of individuals carrying weapons; not everyone on campus may be aware of the policy. This is true for a variety of campus activities and events. The senator clarified the question by explaining the belief that a change in the policy will change conditions for faculty a great deal. If people are permitted to carry concealed in learning spaces, this is qualitatively different than the policy now. Powers responded by stating that a change in policy is likely to make a major difference from the faculty perspective. Yet, from the law enforcement perspective, they deal with a wider variety of groups on campus including the general public. Law enforcement is already dealing with broader issues associated with conceal carry laws in the state of Ohio. As such, a change in policy may not change policing practices; in policing practices, cautionary measures are always necessary. The senator added by describing a scenario in which law enforcement officers involved in a campus shooting situation might not be able to tell the difference between a someone with a weapon who has an intention to harm in an offense and someone with a weapon who would have it in defense. The senator said that it seems like a conceal carry policy would cause more people to be in danger. Powers stated that the senator was describing a friendly fire situation; this is a concern. OHIO has joined a group of law enforcement officers in the state of Ohio that discuss this issue and other issues.

- A senator asked if the change in policy would permit weapons in residence halls. McLaughlin and Associate Vice President & Dean of Students Jenny Hall-Jones were not sure if weapons would be permitted. McLaughlin noted that he assumes the Board could create policy to allow weapons in some locations / spaces on campus yet not in others. As such, it could be possible. However, it was also noted that changes in policy at other campuses have not permitted weapons in residence halls. As a follow-up, the senator asked if candles and incense permitted in residence halls. Hall-Jones indicated that they were not because they are considered a fire hazard. The senator remarked that, if we assume that candles and incense could be hazards if left unattended in residence halls, then perhaps we should apply the same thinking to weapons in residence halls.

- A senator asked if the Division of Student Affairs had considered what challenges a change in the policy might cause for residence life or other similar services on campus. Associate Vice President & Dean of Students Jenny Hall-Jones indicated that they had considered many of the same issues the Faculty Senate appears to have considered. Another might be from the student perspective in which students might think about a faculty member carrying concealed.
• McLaughlin mentioned workplace violence in general. Although the Resolution is focused on the issue of academic freedom, there is more to consider than just student-faculty interactions including interactions among faculty or with staff or with administrators.

• A senator noted that traditional-aged students are in a growth, development, and exploration stage of life. Sometimes, this may include behavior that might result in impaired decision making. Does this make a change in policy even more concerning? Vice President for Student Affairs Jason Pina mentioned that he had difficulties at another university recruiting and retaining Resident Advisors and Graduate Hall Directors on campus when that university changed policies about weapons on campus. There was no history of problems, but the potential for problems caused problems with recruiting leaders.

• A senator asked if any members of the Executive Committee had a sense of what the Board of Trustees might do or decide. Senator Amy White remarked that the Executive Committee does not have direct knowledge about what the Board of Trustees is thinking or what they might do. McLaughlin added that he has had conversations with the President and Provost about this question prior to the bill being signed into law. The President and Provost have suggested that their conversations with the Board have been about the types of information and input the Board will want, as well the process for change. However, the President and Provost have indicated a clear direction from the Board. In fact, the Board may decide not to address the issue (which would maintain the current campus policy).

• A guest suggested that there are weapons already on campus (either legally or illegally) and argued that the Resolution is not going to change that fact. There are students and faculty on campus that are background checked, trained and already licensed to carry conceal. The guest argued that the fastest way to stop someone intending to use a weapon for mass violence – knife, gun, or another weapon – is another person with a weapon. The guest stated that this is fact. A senator responded by disputing the guests claims. A report s/he recently read tested 10 people with licenses for conceal carry. The test involved a scenario with an active shooter; all 10 both failed to stop the shooter as well as hurt bystanders. There are other, real situations that indicate the same.

• A senator asked if there is data that supports the position that concealed carry helps in shooting situations. Ohio University Police Chief Andrew Powers said that he does not have any data.

• A senator noted that it would be important to know the data – as well as how a change in policy might change the practices and policies of law enforcement officers. This is likely to be important to the Board of Trustees. Associate Vice President & Dean of Students Jenny Hall-Jones noted that only one student in the past five years has had a weapons charge through OHIO judiciaries.

• McLaughlin stated that this is a conversation that will go on for many months if the Board decides to take the issue up. As such, there will be time to gather data, summarize information, gather opinions from people, etc. The proposed resolution asks the Faculty Senate to go on the record to voice an opinion. However, it is unlikely that this will be the last word from the faculty (and others) if the Board decides to address the issue.

• A senator asked if the local context – especially in Athens as a primarily residential campus – is important to consider. The amount of alcohol consumed near the Athens campus is likely different than RHE campuses. Alcohol consumption should be a consideration when thinking about the policy. McLaughlin noted that the administration is aware of the complexities involving the different campuses and different spaces.

• A senator asked for an expansion of the third paragraph to include more than just instructional spaces and faculty offices to include residential spaces and other campus facilities. McLaughlin received this as a friendly amendment.

[Motion to have the second reading immediately after the first reading. Motion approved by a show of hands vote. The following comments were made during the second reading.]
• Based upon the friendly amendment, McLaughlin modified the language of the Resolution to change from “in instructional spaces and faculty offices” to “on our campuses.”

• A senator shared that s/he has been both harassed and stalked by students. As such, knowing that students have might have weapons and a policy that permits students to have weapons in his/her office are very different things.

• A senator emphasized that the policy should not permit students to have firearms if we do not permit candles and incense.

• A senator shared that s/he is aware of student-on-student problems with harassment and stalking. These types of issues should be considered when thinking about this policy.

V. Faculty Initiated Proposal on DACA and Adding Immigration Status as a Protected Category under the Harassment Policy—Discussion and Vote

✧ Topic 1: Proposal Background. Associate Professor Loren Lybarger (Classics & World Religion) shared background about the petition. Lybarger shared that the petition came from a group of approximately 80 faculty who formed an informal, rapid response network of people willing to provide support, advice, and assistance to students, faculty, and staff. This group decided to take up the idea of a petition based upon an earlier petition by a single faculty member. Unlike the previous petition that asked OHIO to declare itself as a sanctuary campus, the petition is focused on modifying existing policies. Lybarger welcomed contact from any faculty member who would like to be added to the list of names of those involved in the response network. McLaughlin stated that the petition meets the threshold (i.e., more than 10% of faculty signed) to be brought forward to faculty senate. By policy, the faculty senate votes and discusses the petition at the same meeting.

✧ Topic 2: Proposal Summary. Through a petition, the proposal seeks to add “immigration status” as a protected category under the harassment policy explicitly to recognize the vulnerabilities and struggles of undocumented/DACA-documented students, faculty, and staff at Ohio University. Furthermore, the proposal calls on Ohio University Administration to (1) reaffirm the university’s commitment to abide by our policies of non-harassment, non-discrimination, and privacy, (2) ensure that the identities of undocumented members of our community continue to be protected in accordance with our stated policies and legal responsibilities, and (3) assign an administrative office with the responsibility for counseling DACA students on their legal rights and immigration situation as well as for directing them to local, state, and national resources. This support should be openly declared as being offered in the strictest of confidence.

○ Please refer to Appendix C for the full-text of the petition / proposal.

✓ A senator moved to separate the petition into four parts for the purposes of voting. The four parts were as follows:

1. Add “immigration status” as a protected category under the harassment policy explicitly to recognize the vulnerabilities and struggles of undocumented/DACA-documentized students, faculty, and staff at Ohio University.

2. Reaffirm the university’s commitment to abide by our policies of non-harassment, non-discrimination, and privacy.

3. Ensure that the identities of undocumented members of our community continue to be protected in accordance with our stated policies and legal responsibilities.

4. Assign an administrative office with the responsibility for counseling DACA students on their legal rights and immigration situation as well as for directing them to local, state, and national resources. This support should be openly declared as being offered in the strictest of confidence.
Vote to separate the petition into four parts as described for the purposes of voting was approved by raise of hands vote: 24 votes in the affirmative, 15 votes in the negative, and 1 abstention.

✓ A senator requested a roll call vote for each of the four parts. Accordingly, the Faculty Senate voted as follows for the four parts by a roll call vote:

1. Add “immigration status” as a protected category under the harassment policy explicitly to recognize the vulnerabilities and struggles of undocumented/DACA-documented students, faculty, and staff at Ohio University.
   - 35 votes in the affirmative, 7 votes in the negative, and 2 abstentions.

2. Reaffirm the university’s commitment to abide by our policies of non-harassment, non-discrimination, and privacy.
   - 44 votes in the affirmative, 0 votes in the negative, and 0 abstentions.

3. Ensure that the identities of undocumented members of our community continue to be protected in accordance with our stated policies and legal responsibilities.
   - 43 votes in the affirmative, 1 vote in the negative, and 0 abstentions.

4. Assign an administrative office with the responsibility for counseling DACA students on their legal rights and immigration situation as well as for directing them to local, state, and national resources. This support should be openly declared as being offered in the strictest of confidence.
   - 18 votes in the affirmative, 25 votes in the negative, and 1 abstention.

Questions and Discussions

• A senator asked for clarification about item #3 as listed in the original petition language (i.e., “assign an administrative office”). Does this wording indicate adding a new administrative office or does the wording ask that an existing office be assigned with these responsibilities? Senator Paul Patton, a chief sponsor of the petition, responded by explaining that the petitioners do not necessarily know what is the best and most appropriate; they are not in the role of the administration. As such, the petition intentionally left the language vague.

• A senator remarked that s/he was not comfortable with the vagueness of this language. The senator stated that the three main offices that would likely be assigned to these responsibilities already state that they do not have the expertise to assist with such legal issues. As such, the senator remarked that the issue of providing legal advice is a “poison pill” to the other parts of the petition. The senator encouraged the petitioners to remove this part of the petition.

• Patton asked if the Provost is required to sign resolutions as a whole or if the Provost can affirm only parts of a resolution. McLaughlin noted that, if the Provost does not sign a resolution, she explains the reasons for not signing it. The Faculty Senate can then decide to change the Resolution, pass a revised version, and submit a revised version to the Provost for signature. Associate Provost for Faculty & Academic Planning Howard Dewald indicated that the Provost is able sign or reject a Resolution in its entirety.

• Patton argued that administrative assistance to provide services is important. He argued that the University has a responsibility to help students. A senator responded by stating that the petition requires providing legal advice to students, which University offices currently state that they are not competent to provide. Patton responded by stating that, as in the past, the University identifies and hires people who can fulfill services necessary to assist students.

• A senator asked for clarification about legal terms. Specifically, what does the term “protected category” mean legally and/or in practice? Another senator added by asking to for clarification of the current Harassment Policy. McLaughlin cited Policy 40.001: Equal Employment and
**Educational Opportunity.** Patton added that the language in Policy 40.001 is specific to employment while the **Notice of Non-Discrimination** may be broader in context.

- A **senator** asked for clarification about #2 as listed in the original petition language (i.e., “Ensure that the identities of undocumented members of our community continue to be protected in accordance with our stated policies and legal responsibilities.”). What are our stated policies? How does this change stated policies? **McLaughlin** argued that this component of the petition is asking for a continuation of existing policies.

- A **senator** shared the concerns of others about the requests in the petition – specifically issues with providing legal advice. The senator asked if national origin and national ancestry (already listed existing policies and notices) address the same group as that in the petition.

- A **senator** asked if there are legal complications not being considered in the petition. What is the responsibility of the University? These responsibilities are further complicated by international law.

- A **guest** remarked that the protected classes currently listed as protected classes were not always protected. It took time, effort, and sacrifice to protect the rights of each of the classes listed. Protecting all members of our community are important.

- A **senator** suggested language changes that would not necessarily obligate the University to provide legal advice to students.

- **Lybarger** argued that the petition was written to generate discussion across the campus. Even if it is not approved, the requests will not go away. As such, he is not necessarily concerned about if the Provost will sign the petition or not. Instead, he expressed concerns about changing the language too much given the fact that over 100 faculty members signed it as written. If there are too many changes, it would be necessary to go back to the signers. Although Lybarger expressed appreciation for the thoughts and concerns, this is a national issue that is important.

- A **senator** remarked that not all the protected classes listed are legally protected classes in terms of equal employment. Adding immigration status is not a problem; employment and non-discrimination are different.

- A **senator** remarked that DACA students can be hired given existing national / state policies.

- A **senator** remarked that the University’s equal opportunity employment is different than the harassment policy. As such, the petition is just a confirmation of existing policies. The first statement (i.e., add immigration status) is no different than asking people not to harass anyone; this should be something we can support. The other #1 (i.e., reaffirm the policy) and #2 (protect identities) are just continuations of our current policy. As such, it is simply #3 (i.e., assign an administrative office) that causes concerns.

- A **senator** remarked that s/he is sympathetic to the petition but has concerns about the current language. Specifically, the language is too vague. S/he asks the petitioners to improve the language to be specific so that it can provide benefits for students.

- A **senator** asked what the University is currently doing to address the issue. **McLaughlin** reminded the Senate about the about the remarks made by the President and Provost said at the previous faculty senate meeting; the university is doing several things to assist students and others. In addition, McLaughlin noted that President signed an open letter about the value of DACA.

- A **senator** asked if the petitioners could change the language to reflect legal policies so that the faculty senate could vote in the way that many senators may want to yet cannot given the current language. **McLaughlin** stated that the petitioners may consider our feedback and prepare something new. However, this discussion alone is likely to generate discussion and conversation.

- A **senator** noted that there is federal immigration law that needs to be followed. The University cannot use taxpayer money to protect students who are not legal. Providing protection to people
beyond what the law allows is a grey area that should be avoided. It will invite scrutiny from legislatures.

- A senator asked for the language to change before the vote. Lybarger explained that faculty signed it in a certain way, so the two representatives in attendance at the meeting do not feel comfortable changing the language without the approval of the those who signed the petition as written.

VI. Finance & Facilities Committee (Susan Williams)
[No presentation given; meeting adjourned prior to committee report]

VII. Promotion & Tenure Committee (Ben Bates)
[No presentation given; meeting adjourned prior to committee report]

VIII. Professional Relations Committee (Sherrie Gradin)
[No presentation given; meeting adjourned prior to committee report]

IX. Educational Policy & Student Affairs Committee (Charles Buchanan)
[No presentation given; meeting adjourned prior to committee report]

X. New Business
- None

Questions and Discussions
- None

XI. Adjournment
- The meeting was adjourned at 9:36PM.
Appendix A

Faculty Invitation of Proposals & Faculty Initiated Referendum (*Faculty Handbook* VI.B.6-7)

6. Faculty Initiation of Proposals

Any ten (10) faculty members eligible to vote in Senate elections may present any matter they wish to the Senate at a regular meeting. The matter will be discussed and scheduled for vote at the next regular Senate meeting or, if the Senate wishes, at a Special Meeting called for the purpose of considering the petition or other matters.

Ten percent of the faculty members eligible to vote in Senate elections may present any matter to the Senate at a regularly scheduled meeting, and the Senate will debate and vote on the matter at that meeting, if the petitioners wish and if they state their wish in the petition itself. If the Senate acts contrary to the petition or modifies it in some substantial way unacceptable to the petitioners, the petition will be considered to have met the requirements of a petition in the referendum procedure (Section VI.B.6), and a referendum of all faculty members eligible to vote in Senate elections will be instituted in keeping with the requirements of the procedure for a referendum.

7. Faculty Initiated Referendum

A petition signed by ten percent of the faculty calling for a referendum on any matter, submitted to the chair of the Senate, will cause the chair to convene the Elections Committee, to prepare a ballot, and submit it to faculty eligible to vote in Senate elections. This will be done and the chair will announce the results within thirty days of receipt of the petition.
Appendix B

Sense of the Senate Resolution on Senate Bill 199

Executive Committee
Faculty Senate
First Reading
January 9, 2017

Whereas the Governor has signed Senate Bill 199 (House Bill 48), a law that will allow permit holders to carry concealed firearms on college and university campuses, if the boards of trustees choose to allow them; and

Whereas the full and free discussion of potentially controversial ideas and knowledge is essential to the academic mission of the University; and

Whereas the possible presence of concealed weapons in instructional spaces and faculty offices on our campuses will have a chilling effect on the free exchange of ideas;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Faculty Senate urges the Board of Trustees to take no action, thereby affirming Ohio University’s commitment to a weapon free campus.
Appendix C

PETITION LANGUAGE TO BE SUBMITTED TO OHIO UNIVERSITY FACULTY SENATE

"Dear Ohio University Administration:

The core mission of higher education is the advancement of knowledge, people and society through open inquiry, rigorous argument, and the application of verifiable evidence.

As a public institution that serves the residents of Ohio, the United States, and many other places, Ohio University seeks to welcome all individuals who are willing and able to contribute to that core mission, regardless of their race, ethnicity, nationality, gender and gender identity, religion, sexual orientation, ability/disability, or social and economic class.

Ohio University seeks to promote respect for all individuals regardless of their background, both in the university and in the wider community. This important goal is reflected in the university’s harassment policy, which states that it should be an environment in which “students, faculty, and staff can thrive, and (...) is welcoming, and free of fear.”

Ohio University’s Equal Employment and Educational Opportunity policy (40.001) states: “There shall be no discrimination against any person in employment or educational opportunities because of race, color, religion, age, ethnicity, national origin, national ancestry, sex, pregnancy, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, military service or veteran status, mental or physical disability, or genetic information, except as explicitly provided for in this policy.”

1. Today, it is essential to add “immigration status” as a protected category under the harassment policy explicitly to recognize the vulnerabilities and struggles of undocumented/DACA documented students, faculty, and staff at Ohio University.

In addition, we call on you to take the following urgently necessary steps:

1. Reaffirm the university’s commitment to abide by our policies of non-harassment, non-discrimination, and privacy.
2. Ensure that the identities of undocumented members of our community continue to be protected in accordance with our stated policies and legal responsibilities.
3. Assign an administrative office with the responsibility for counseling DACA students on their legal rights and immigration situation as well as for directing them to local, state, and national resources. This support should be openly declared as being offered in the strictest of confidence.

Let us renew our efforts to guarantee that all individuals in our community have the opportunity to participate in the life of the university and to be physically safe and free from fear.”