In its actual business, the Senate unanimously passed three proposals:

* A proposal from the Rules Committee to amend the Financial Conflicts of Interest Policy for Faculty so that it would work with the Executive Committee of Faculty Council instead of the full Council and to allow more than 6 faculty members to be members of the advisory committee to allow access to requisite expertise.

  *A proposal from the Diversity Committee to amend Faculty Rule 3335-6-03. This removes the need for probationary faculty to ask for a one-year stoppage of the tenure clock due to parental leave in case of childbirth or adoption, and allows three such stoppages.

  * A proposal from the Council on Academic Affairs to abolish the Center for Survey Research, which Center lost its major contract and is no longer viable.

There were three further items on the agenda: the Living Culture Institute, conservation and sustainability at OSU, and an open discussion on Senate reform.

(1) Michael Mercil from Art spoke on the Living Culture initiative, which he said grew from the question: Why is it so hard to find something good to eat on campus? It involves a collaboration with FAES and other units of the university. Mercil said that artists attempt to make things visible, and that their aim was to make the university more visible in influencing culture.

Students worked on a sustainable farm to get food for the annual graduation party. They grew beans on the grounds of the Wexner Center, and generally many participants made changes in lifestyle that were visible.

(2) Aparna Dial, director of the University office of energy services and sustainability, made a presentation on University efforts at conservation.

She said conservation was HOT; Dow Jones now posts a sustainability index. She pointed out that some elements of sustainability are profitable and so make economic sense. For OSU, this means encouraging profitable stewardship.

The principle is that we shouldn't compromise future stakeholders' ability to meet their needs as we meet ours.

Her office is putting three initiatives forward: (a) a waste management program; (b) an energy management program, and (c) education and outreach efforts. She ticked off current problems and responses. OSU currently recycles 18% of the waste stream; the goal is 40%, which should be cost-effective and achievable. Nine buildings are currently trying out a one-container solution. We're instituting a cartridge recycling program, and OSU will take computers and parts from the public and recycle appropriately. The campus utility bill is $60M/yr, and rising costs have brought hardships. The University is starting a metering program with new meters; ten buildings a year will get energy audits and automating software until the usage is under control. The University is using gas futures to reduce gas costs. Buildings will be required to meet improved design standards.

The University is facing a $500M deferred maintenance problem. This also will be addressed.
So far, she said, her office has saved the University $4.7M. She wants to cooperate with students and raise energy awareness and create incentives to reduce students' energy use now and in their later lives. Several undergraduate student organization representatives in the Senate suggested they were interested in cooperation with her office.

(3) The open discussion focused mostly on student worries that suggestions for change would eliminate student participation in the Senate and its committees. A list of possible suggestions was circulated that fed these student worries. In addition, Faculty Council chair Allan Silverman is on record as favoring a Faculty Senate rather than our unique University Senate.

Other suggestions tendered were to think of ways to end the feeling that Senate service is a career-killer; to allow the Senate committees to create more ad hoc subcommittees that would do the work, spread service among a wider group and lessen the pressure on and workload of current senators; to have better information sharing; and to better coordinate the work of multiple university committees dealing with the same issue (the variety of diversity committees was the explicit example referred to).

The president finally suggested that the discussion was so unfocused that it could be wise to get a small group of faculty, students, and administrators together to make suggestions for Senate reform. There were no further suggestions, and the meeting adjourned.