The secretary of the Senate lauded the cooperation of student leaders with one another, and with the faculty and administration. He said the groups were meeting more frequently with one another than in the past. He sounded an optimistic note looking forward to the year.

The meeting opened with three votes: Establishment of a Ph. D. in dance studies; establishment of an M. A. in international law; and creation of a department of urology. It was said that the dance degree would raise the program to the highest level with few peers. The law degree would help make OSU's law school more involved in international cooperation. Both these proposals passed unanimously.

A third proposal was to create a Department of Urology. Seventy-five percent of the top programs in urology are in departments. Most of the top ten programs are departments, too. The change of the division of urology into a department would put OSU in among these highest ranked departments. This proposal would be permitted because of a previously approved exception for the College of Medicine to a rule that departments have ten or more members. One senator asked whether periodic oversight would see whether the number increases to the appropriate level. Randy Smith said that the Council on Academic Affairs (CAA) had looked at programs accepted with exceptions to the rule, and all had progressed past the minimum level. He said that CAA planned to revisit this rule. This passed by voice with a plurality of votes, with a clearly audible smaller number of nay votes.

After a short recess, the president gave her state of the university talk, "Realizing the vision of a great university."

President Holbrook began by thanking the people she'd worked with during her years as president. She said that a great university was committed to students, to skeptical inquiry, to seeking truth, to producing new knowledge, and to academic excellence.

President Holbrook recited statistics to show how OSU had improved since she began as president. The U.S. News ranking went from 24 to 19; there are 19 programs in the top ten in their fields, and 30 programs in the top 25; Washington Monthly rated OSU as 14th in value; the College of Medicine has made great strides (37th to 32nd, hospitals ranked in the top 5); Pharmacy is in the top 5; Veterinary Medicine is in the top 10; and the Wall Street Journal named the Business School number 2 today. It is the twelfth best undergraduate class in a row. The average ACT score is 26.4. When President Holbrooke came, 33% of OSU freshmen were in the top 10% of their graduating classes; that's now 45% of this year's class. Over 80% of freshmen are in the top quarter of their graduating classes. OSU has students from every Ohio county, 46 states, and 146+ countries. OSU moved from 12th to ninth among public universities in sponsored research, from 39th to 24th in federal funding and is ranked sixth in industry-sponsored funding. Research awards rose from $426M to $590M. OSU had more AAAS Fellow inductees than any other university last year. In 2005, OSU raised $284.2M from 117,000 donors; last year, it passed $2G in endowment. She said it took 129 years to raise the first billion, and just seven to raise the second billion.

President Holbrook cited the 20/10 plan, academic enrichment, selective investment, the diversity action plan, budget restructuring, and Targeted Investment in Excellence (TIE) as characteristics showing OSU is great. She said that great universities are strategic, interdisciplinary, connect with their communities, recognize and reward faculty and staff, enhance the undergraduate experience, are accessible, and are resourceful. Ohio State is all of these, she noted, giving further statistics and specifics, among them the fact that freshman to sophomore retention of African Americans rose to 90%, just trailing the university's 92%. She noted optimistically that about 30% of faculty are women and about 20% of faculty are people of color. She said we still had a way to go in this regard, though these are now higher than ever before.

President Holbrook said that Ohio State ranked third among 'Best Places to Work in Academia' following St. Jude Children's Research Hospital and the J. David Gladstone Institute, respectively, in the survey by The Scientist magazine.
She said the university was concerned about pricing out bright but impecunious students, and said that OSU has hired a senior advisor for economic access.

President Holbrook mentioned that 16% of OSU undergraduates attend OSU Regional Campuses, and that 30% of first quarter freshmen receive their start at a high quality education there.

She noted that state funding had decreased $50M since 2001, and spoke about the university's attempts to re n in the budget, saying the university had saved $37M in the past three years. The $57M Medical Center deficit of 2000 has changed to a surplus. OSU is one of only seven self-sustaining athletic programs, and it just donated $5M toward the library renovation.

President Holbrook closed by mentioning federal and citizen calls for increased accountability that she said OSU was prepared to meet, and said it was important to convince lawmakers that investment in OSU is an investment in Ohio's future.

--------
Gordon Aubrecht
Professor of Physics, OSU
OSU Physics    (614) 292-2574, FAX (614) 292-7557
Marion Campus  (740) 389-6786, ext. 6250, FAX (614) 292-5817