**Academic Affairs Committee**

Minutes

Date: March 29, 2017   
Time: 6:00 pm

Location: Faculty Commons

1. CALL TO ORDER:
2. **ROLL:** Beau Grzanich, Ann Haugo, Kathleen Lonbom, Michael Gizzi, James Pancrazio (Chair), Wade Nichols, Kyle Walsh, Jim Jawahar, Zeng Lin, Lauren Porter, Jesús Magaña, Ian Mayester, Joe Trefzger (UCC liaison).

**Underlined indicates absent**

1. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Committee did not hold a meeting on March 8, 2017**
2. CONSENT CALENDAR
   1. Policy 7.7.2 (approved via email on 3-8-2017)
3. STANDARD ORDER OF BUISNESS
4. GOOD OF THE ORDER
5. ANNOUCEMENTS:
6. PROGRAM:
   1. AAUP Memo on Targeted Online Harassment of Faculty

Chair’s comments: After the AAUP Memo, entitled “Targeted Online Harassment of Faculty” (January 31, 2017) was circulated among the members of the Faculty Caucus, Senate Chair Susan Kalter requested a follow up to determine how Illinois State was poised to respond to these concerns. As Chair, I contacted specific members of the university community for a general overview: these included members of the Academic Senate, the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, specific university administrators, the Dean of Students, the Title IX Coordinator, University Counsel, the director of Women’s and Gender Studies, and a representative from Milner Library.

Specifically, the AAUP had recommended the following two measures: “1) The AAUP urges administrations, governing boards, and faculties, individually and collectively, to speak out clearly and forcefully to defend academic freedom and to condemn targeted harassment and intimidation of faculty members; and, 2) The AAUP recommends that administrations and elected faculty bodies work jointly to establish institutional regulations that prohibit the surreptitious recording of classroom discourse or of private meetings between students and faculty members.”

Suffice to say that Illinois State University already has several policies that address the issues outlined in the January 31, 2017 memo. Academic Freedom, as a protection for both students and faculty, is embedded in the University’s constitution (see Article II a, and Article III a). Academic Freedom is also described at length in University Policy 3.3.13. Along those same lines, Associate Vice President for Academic Administration, Policy, and Faculty Affairs Sam Catanzaro soundly reaffirmed the administration’s support for academic freedom in the Code of Ethics (1.17). And, Academic Freedom appears in numerous college and departmental governance documents.

In regard to “Targeted Online Harassment of Faculty,” Illinois State University also has policies in the Faculty Handbook that speak directly to goals of fostering “a campus culture that promotes respect and civility.” The Student Code of Conduct also “outlines behavioral expectations for all students.” Both the Faculty Handbook and the Student Code of Conduct address the issue of campus climate based on respect and civility. (http://provost.illinoisstate.edu/downloads/FacultyHandbook20152016.pdf)

There are two policies that specifically addresses the the “surreptitious recording of classroom discourse or of private meetings between students and faculty members.” The first of which is University policy 1.7 entitled “Use Of Electronic Equipment For Surveillance Purposes” states that “electronic surveillance equipment… shall not be used in a manner which would potentially endanger the privacy or civil liberties of any individual.” The second policy appears, albeit not explicitly, the Student Code of Conduct, under the category entitled “Acts of Dishonesty.” Paragraph “d” lists “engaging in any electronic exploitation of another person, including eavesdropping on, surveillance of, and/or the recording and/or broadcasting non-public actions, in any forum. For the purpose of this policy, people have a reasonable expectation of privacy when not in public and the dissemination of visual or audio transmissions of the actions of a person without that person’s consent are prohibited.”

Michael Zajac, the Coordinator of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution in the Dean of Students Office, commented that unauthorized recordings of classroom lectures fall under the “Acts of Dishonesty, paragraph d” policy. His recommendation was that “faculty either cite this policy in their syllabus, state it to the class, and make it a class expectation. Additionally, if they see it occur, inform the student to stop and if that does not occur, forward the information onto SCCR and we will address the issue.”

In should also be noted that, in regard to intimidation or speech that threatens the university’s values of inclusiveness, the Division of Student Affairs has established the Inclusive Community Response Team that responds to reports of instances of hate and bias. The group has discussed online harassment, but the committee spends most of its time responding to reported incidents of campus bias.

In the process of conducting the follow up, Milner librarian Alexis Wolstein, who has studied the internet and hate speech, forwarded a recent article about how universities across the country are dealing with problematic speech on anonymous location-based comment posting on sites like the one called “Yik Yak.” The article “Campus Safety v. Freedom of Speech: An Evaluation of University Responses to Problematic Speech on Anonymous Social Media” by Susan DuMont appeared in the Journal of Business and Technology Law in 2016. The author discusses the implications of both banning access to the site, which has freedom of speech implications, and ignoring the posts, which on occasion contained threatening, homophobic and misogynistic speech. The author argues that neither of these approaches are legally sound for universities. But because universities have Title IX obligations and courts, at times, have considered these institutions as *en loco parentis*, meaning that they have some type of protective obligation toward students in their charge, the author recommends that institutions develop reasonable policies to address these types of problematic speech.

Discussion:

What is the current legality about filming in class? Is this public or private space under the laws of the State of Illinois?

Some faculty may want to permit students to use a camera or recording devise for educational purposes only.

Should the language of the student code be tweaked to clarify that surreptitious filming also applies to the classroom?

Is a possible solution to change the language of the Student code of conduct or the teacher's syllabus so that video or recording is used just for classroom purposes?

Faculty and students have rights not to be filmed or photographed without their consent in a place that are private such as classrooms.

Page 7 of the Student Code of Conduct has the section about “Acts of dishonesty”. One potential wording would be “including to but not limited to classrooms.”

Concern that if the university didn’t have some means to report anonymous posts, the university could be held accountable.

Difficulty in monitoring the social webs

The popularity of Yik Yak, the anonymous location-based social application, is dying out. It is not as popular as it used to be. Some people used to take advantage of the application to post some irresponsible things.

The university shouldn’t be focusing on constant monitoring of this site or others like it, but

instead make students aware of what actions to take if they see posts such as threats.

ICRT needs to be made more known to students; they need more promotion for this so

more students know where to report things they see.

Promotion ideas: place some information of some sort in the little bags that SGA gives away to students at the beginning of the fall, this could be a good start at making the ICRT name more known to students.

General conclusions:

* Seek clarification with university lawyers about a policy statement for syllabi that is consistent.
* Circulate copies of the AAUP memo and our current policies to academic administrators, deans and Department Chairs so that they are better positions to assist faculty who come to them with specific concerns.
* Consider adding language to the Student Code of Conduct to include classrooms to the paragraph that deals with “Acts of Dishonesty.”
* Promote the ICRT so that students, faculty and staff will know how to make an online report.
  1. Annual report from the University Library Committee: includes discussion of changes to the Senate Blue Book about the composition of the committee, record of discussions about greater integration with the university, tensions between the use of space and accessibility to materials, and the issue of the library’s unique position in the university having tenure-line faculty and staff.

Discussion:

Report is from last year’s activities

Space, books, and places of study will continue to be issues for the library

Students on the committee stated clearly that the Milner Library was meeting a crucial need as both a traditional library and as a space for students to accumulate knowledge, do projects, work with

others. One Student Senator commented, “99 percent of my group projects take place in the collaborative work space in Milner.” Many of the academic buildings are short on study space and most of the campus study space is in the library, to take this away would to remove important resources for the students. Library should continue offering collaborative learning spaces and keep up with the increase in technology fields

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