**Faculty Caucus Meeting Minutes**

**Wednesday, May 07, 2025**

**Immediately Following the Academic Senate Meeting**

***Call to Order***

Chairperson Bonnell called the meeting to order.

***Roll call***

***Public Comment: All speakers must sign in with the Senate Secretary prior to the start of the meeting.***

None.

***Elections:***

***Campus Communication Committee Faculty Caucus Rep 2025-2027***

*Replacing: John McHale 2023-2025*

The Faculty Caucus elected Michael Barrowclough to the Campus Communication Committee.

***Academic Freedom Ethics and Grievance Committee***

*Fusun Akman, Professor, CAS 2025-2028 (second term)*

*Ui-Jeen Yu, Professor, CAST 2025-2028*

The Faculty Caucus elected the AFEGC slate unanimously.

***Information/Action Item:***

***From the Faculty Caucus Executive Committee***

[***Ad Hoc Committee Proposal***](https://illinoisstateuniversity.sharepoint.com/:w:/r/sites/AcademicSenate/Academic%20Senate%20Sharepoint/SUB%20-%20Faculty%20Caucus/Faculty%20Caucus%20Packets%2024-25/2025.05.07/merged%20committee.docx?d=w17343f5aab20405ab64d764de3e990d2&csf=1&web=1&e=Wbw58M)

Chairperson Bonnell: This next item is from the Faculty Caucus Executive Committee. It is creating an ad hoc committee. We are sending this straight to Senate for information/action item approval. I think this is going to tax my Robert’s Rules, so I am going to be really deliberate about this. This is about the charge for this University Review Committee Plus, if you have read that. The purpose of this ad hoc committee is to create a new version of the current ASPT that incorporates necessary changes due to the UFISU contract. According to that charge, the committees work would be completed by April 15th, 2026. Does anyone have any questions on what is being proposed? In that document you see the people who would be represented on the ad hoc committee.

Senator Peterson: Is the purpose of this committee to provide the Caucus with a working document that will be then vetted through the Caucus for ASPT, or is this what will be final voting?

Chairperson Bonnell: It would come to Faculty Caucus, but what the URC+ would be doing would be creating a resource that the URC will then look at. There would be a couple extra steps. This would not be replacing the purpose of the URC, it would be membership to talk about some of the changes that need to be made into ASPT. I will look to AVP Gatto, is there anything you would like to share on this? URC invited Chair Horst to attend a meeting, and this is the recommendation that was created.

Craig Gatto: Right. The conundrum was the URC can go through a series of changes, do everything, send it to Senate, Senate can vote, and then go to the union and the union will say, “Oh no, that is not quite what we’d like to see, so start over.” This is to have information flowing back and forth so there is not a lot of wasted effort that can just be thrown back. It is kind of a liaison to your leadership of the union. The process doesn’t conflict with the CBA.

Senator Nikolaou: I have a recommendation to slightly change the wording from the charge. The way that it is phrased right now it says, “the purpose of the ad hoc committee is to create a new version of the current ASPT that incorporates necessary changes.” Based on what we were talking about at Exec, that is not the charge of the committee. The charge is to look at what is the new contract and what are necessary changes that need to be incorporated into the ASPT. It is not to create a new version of the current ASPT. The ad hoc plus is going to be one committee, they are going to recommend the necessary changes. It will still have to go through the URC and the URC is going to be the one responsible for voting and then forwarding the changes to the ASPT to the Faculty Caucus. That was the one thing they were talking about on Exec, that we need to be pretty clear about what is the charge of the ad hoc. It is not that the ad hoc sends it directly to the Faculty Caucus, it will still go to the URC since that is on the contract, the URC is still the body that does ASPT revisions. The wording would be, “the purpose of this ad hoc committee is to incorporate changes to the current ASPT as necessitated specifically by the 2025-2028 UFISU contract.” just to clarify that the incorporated changes to the ASPT that are necessitated specifically by the contract.

Senator Blum: At first, I thought I understood, now I am a little confused. Maybe it is just me. The word “incorporate” to me means write language and put it in. The way I thought you described it was not exactly right, I thought that it was conceptualized as, “we are going to identify discrepancies between the CBA and the current ASPT then it would be URC’s traditional role to write those changes.”

Criag Gatto: That’s right. The URC is still doing the work and would show the ad hoc committee.

Senator Blum: Maybe it is “identify.”

Senator Nikolaou: Instead of “incorporate” we can put what you said, “identify discrepancies.”

Senator McHale: To identify the discrepancies and then to incorporate where appropriate.

Craig Gatto: Have the URC incorporate.

Senator McHale: That’s right.

Senator Stewart: Two related questions- are there any kinds of restrictions on the membership intended for this committee? For example, could a department chair serve as a college representative? Could a dean? Is the idea that this is faculty members?

Criag Gatto: They have to be union members on the union side. I am on the committee.

Senator Stewart: I am looking more at the College of Arts and Sciences position and any restrictions on who can serve in that role. Second, how would those members be chosen?

Senator Nikolaou: This one would be seated members of the URC. Members from the College of Arts and Sciences it is who is already in the URC from CAS, that would be the person who is one the Ad Hoc Committee.

Senator Stewart: Thank you, it didn’t say it was going to be composed of URC members.

Senator Meyer: In terms of the April date, is that when the committee needs to be finished or is that when everything needs to be approved?

Senator Bonnell: In my vision it seems like everything could be approved by that point. It seems like the work of the ad hoc committee could be finished and then URC could do the next part of that work. It occurs to me the URC might be able to work as they are going along.

Senator Meyer: Why not more union members? Is there a reason why it is two?

Craig Gatto: Essentially every member of the URC is a union member and most of the bargaining unit except me. The entire URC.

Senator Meyer: Is there a reason why it is only two? It says, “contract enforcement team members: two.” Those are designees. They are not the faculty, they are designees of the union, that is the way I read it.

Craig Gatto: But they would be faculty.

Senator Meyer: Right, the specific designees for enforcement, that they would then have some kind of working knowledge of the contract. URC members, I understood that those are two separate individuals. They are two different people that I assume were chosen by the union.

Chairperson Bonnell: I thought that was part of the URC’s proposal, that there would be members. I don’t think that came from Exec. What did come from Exec was the number from the Provost’s office. I don’t know why two. When you think about convening a group, I think about a practical thing like getting enough people together is hard enough and then how many people would you need. Maybe I am assuming incorrectly, but those members would be sharing their feedback with others in the union.

Craig Gatto: And again, they are not drafting anything. URC is, which has a member from each college. They are more to liaise with the union saying, “here is what we are doing.” It is not to change to URC to be union committee.

Senator Meyer: Is this a number that we know the union would satisfied with? Would they possibly want more members?

Chairperson Bonnell: My understanding is the URC met with Chair Horst and they came up with this proposal and this is something they agreed upon. Since it is the URC’s function, this is their role. I think it would be a nice outreach in working with the union. I actually don’t know if anyone reached out to the union.

Senator Nikolaou: One of the things that we mentioned was down the road the URC might want to include a liaison from the tenure track faculty union. Then at this initial stage, since we will have made several changes on the basic document, it would be a good idea to have union representation on that ad hoc committee. A couple of people who were on Exec said they are members of the union; the idea is for why the enforcement team members are going to be present is because during the negotiations there were variable discussions about the contract that may not be as clear. They want to be able to get feedback from the people who were really in the room instead of just having the URC make recommendations without knowing these things. I don’t know what was going on in the room either.

Senator Meyer: I agree, I think it is a good idea to have union representation on the ad hoc committee. I also think the union liaison on the URC would be a good idea. Do we know that two is ample? Is that something that would be agreeable with the union? Is that enough representation for them? Have we checked with them?

Chairperson Bonnell: I don’t think anyone has officially checked. I would go back to what AVP Gatto said which is that all of them are union members.

Craig Gatto: They are all represented, whether they joined or not.

Senator Meyer: It sounds like two is just an arbitrary number.

Craig Gatto: It could be one. It is really to bring back the changes to the union, but it is not for the union to run the meeting. The URC is running the meeting. It is just for information. What could happen is the whole ASPT changes, it comes to Caucus, Caucus votes on it, and then the union finds out and says no. That is what these two people are trying to prevent from happening.

Senator McHale: One of the things that was brought up when we were discussing this was the idea that the union would have an opportunity to pass it by their own Legal rather than just on the administration side. Where that come in the process is the question, I think. Whatever the proposal is, the union is given an opportunity to look at it and then they would be able to take it to counsel. When they come back in agreement or not the union does have a chance to pacify their legal counsel.

Senator Blum: Who has voting rights? And is it an external committee of the Senate?

Craig Gatto: No. The URC has the voting rights.

Senator Blum: At some point they are going to have to make a decision, right?

Craig Gatto: They are going to have to work together. Any change to the terms and conditions of employment, that is ASPT for the most part, the union can demand to bargain over it. Going to their counsel, having them liaise can solve a lot of problems up front.

Senator Blum: The vision of it is that this is just a collaborative group to try to work with the union a priori, before we get to all the work it takes to get an ASPT item passed to then say, “oops.”

Senator Nikolaou: It is an ad hoc committee; it is not an external committee. It is constituted just for this purpose. Whatever is complete by April 15th, that is it. If then the Senate thinks that there is more work to be done and they need to continue, then we can provide an extension to the work of the ad hoc committee. Otherwise, April 15th is it.

Senator Meyer: Is it an ad hoc committee of the Senate?

Senator Nikolaou: It is an ad hoc committee that the Faculty Caucus would approve, so it would be of the Senate.

Senator Peters: How is this all going to work? When this is done, is this a top-down process? This gets completed then it goes to colleges and departments? The departments and colleges are also going to have to ratify and change things as well. How does that work? As a member of my department’s DFSC, I know we have to start developing things that are in line with the union as well. How does all that come together? Does all that have to come together by April 15th as well?

Chairperson Bonnell: There are representatives from each of the colleges. What happens in our case is our URC representative comes back to us at our faculty meetings sharing information and he asks us questions. That is what we do in Milner, maybe it is a little different for us because we are smaller. Does that not happen at other colleges?

Craig Gatto: Your college has a lot of representatives but has 18 units. They probably don’t go to all 18. To answer your question, this would be done and then subsequently departments, just like when the purple book got revised and came out, that had to be approved by the Senate and the following year the departments aligned. It doesn’t happen simultaneously.

Motion to move to action by Senator Valentin.

Second by Senator McHale.

Unanimous approval.

Motion to approve by Chairperson Bonnell.

Senator Blum: Did you want to repeat the final language that was modified?

Senator Nikolaou: “The purpose of this ad hoc committee is to identify discrepancies in the current ASPT necessitated by the 2025-2028 UFISU contract. The committee’s work will be complete by April 15th, 2026.”

Senator Yazedjian: May I make a suggestion to say, “identify changes”? It doesn’t have to be a discrepancy; it could just be a change necessitated by the CBA.

Senator Blum: Yes, that is fine.

Second by Senator Nikolaou.

Unanimous approval for the revised language.

Senator Nikolaou: I will make a friendly amendment to say, “by the URC prior to submission to the Faculty Caucus of the Academic Senate.”

Second by Senator Valentin.

Unanimous approval.

Senator Meyer: Again, I would ask the question. Is the contract enforcement team members from the union of two sufficient? I am not sure we know that. Perhaps amending that language to say 2 to 4? It seemed like the bargaining team had a lot more members. I am wondering too if it is enough.

Craig Gatto: They don’t participate. They take the changes the URC does and take it back. It is iterative. They would go back, there would be more of them then saying whether or not this fits what they are agreeing to, and then they would come back. We would go back and forth. It wouldn’t be 2, it would be the entire leadership of the union that would get the information.

Senator McHale: In regards to Mr. Gatto’s suggestion, it sounds like the committee will be sensitive to the contract as they formulate what is then sent back with those two representatives to the union.

Unanimous approval.

***Communications:***

Chairperson Bonnell: Remember to submit your Internal Committee preferences form by May 15th. Thanks to all those who may have already submitted that.

***Adjournment***

Motion by Senator McHale.   
Second by Senator Valentin.

Unanimous approval.