

ACADEMIC SENATE MINUTES
(Approved)

October 24, 2001

Volume XXXIII, No. 5

Call to Order

Chairperson Curt White called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Roll Call

Senator Crothers called the roll and declared a quorum.

Approval of Minutes of October 10, 2001

Motion XXXIII-31: by Senator Borg, second by Senator Albrecht, to approve the Senate minutes of October 10, 2001. The minutes were unanimously approved.

Chairperson's Remarks

Senator White: We welcome the newly elected non-tenure track faculty Senate representative, Mary Kay Rotsch, to the Senate this evening.

Vice Chairperson/Student Government Association President's Remarks

Senator Kording: The Student Government Association has submitted two resolutions for the Senate Executive Committee agenda. The first resolution is the SGA's endorsement of the Benefit of the Better Grade Policy and the second is a request for a review of the delivery of professional practice services. SGA has made several student appointments to the Senate external committees and is considering a referendum for a rec center.

Administrators' Remarks:

- ***President Boschini:*** On Friday, October 26, 2001, Kent Machina, will be installed as our first endowed chairperson. I will be in Springfield next week to attend a retreat for trustees. Cori Brown, our student trustee, will also attend this retreat.

- ***Provost Al Goldfarb: No Comments.***

- ***Vice President of Student Affairs***
Senator Mamarchev: Our own Guerilla Theatre has been invited by the Governor's Commission Against Hate Crimes to perform at the annual meeting in Chicago on December 18.

- ***Vice President of Finance and Planning***
Senator Bragg: The Board of Trustees has approved our current year budget as well as our proposed fiscal year 2003 appropriations budget. We reported to the Board on an update of the Campus Master Plan and they received it enthusiastically. We will be going back out to campus groups to give an update on the plan and then we will go back to the Board for formal approval.

Committee Reports

Academic Affairs Committee

Senator Borg: The Academic Affairs Committee discussed a proposed admissions policy and also the University Mission Statement. We hope to bring both of those items before the Senate before the end of the fall semester. We also have three proposals on the agenda tonight as information items: 1) Tiered Program Admissions Policy proposal, 2) proposal for revisions to the current General Studies Degree Program, and 3) proposal for a University Studies Degree Program.

Administrative Affairs and Budget Committee

Senator Wells: The committee continued to discuss the issue of student protests. Because the guidelines on this topic are very vague, the committee will draft a proposal for a policy on maintaining order on campus while ensuring free speech.

Faculty Affairs Committee

Senator Deutsch: Faculty Affairs is gathering information to bring before the Senate.

Planning and Finance Committee

Senator Kurtz: The focus groups on collegiate restructuring are ongoing and will conclude at the end of this month. There is a good deal of material on the Senate web site concerning collegiate restructuring, including historical documents on this subject from the ISU archives. We are looking at these historical documents to help us to understand how the process of reorganization should proceed. Jan Cook has volunteered to draft an executive summary of this historical material and I have drafted a document on structuring the process of considering restructuring. The Planning and Finance Committee continues to meet for two hours weekly.

Rules Committee

Senator Reid: The Rules Committee passed a proposal for revisions to the bylaws concerning the election process for the non-tenure track faculty Senate representative. The committee also looked at Milner bylaws revisions and the suggestions from Thomas Hustoles on combining the Faculty Ethics and Grievance Committee and the Academic Freedom Committee. We also looked at a policy involving consensual relationships within the university community.

Information Items

08.10.01.01 Establishment of a Graduation Rate Goal Policy (Academic Affairs Committee)

Senator Eric Thomas: ISU currently has no official policy on a graduation rate goal. I am, therefore, proposing a policy for a graduation rate goal of 60%. The current graduation rate is approximately 55%.

Senator Razaki: Have you compared this rate with our competitor schools?

Senator E. Thomas: Our 55% stacks up reasonably well nationally.

Senator Kurtz: Is this an institutional goal? Does it tie in with our goals for proposed changes in admission policies? I think that there would be a disjunction if we have a static graduation rate goal since we are continually trying to improve our admission standards.

Senator E. Thomas: This would be an institutional goal, but this is not a static policy. We could annually reassess our goal. I don't want to tie this to admission policies, but rather have it as a clear-cut policy on its own.

Senator Borg: University policies are under an automatic three-year review schedule.

Senator Kurtz: Has there been any benchmarking against our comparative institutions or against our aspirational group?

Senator Bragg: With regard to other public universities in Illinois, the average rate is about 55%. We have a group in institutional research looking at comparisons to other universities at levels to which we aspire.

Senator Boschini: I am mainly concerned about our comparison to those universities to which we aspire. Senator Kurtz, why would you want to revisit this policy each year?

Senator Kurtz: Because we would hope that the graduation rate would go up every year.

Senator E. Thomas: There is value in benchmarking, but this is a more introspective type of issue. The goal that we chose to set is higher than where we are. We would reset that goal once it was achieved.

Motion XXXIII-32: By Senator Crothers, second by Senator Armstrong, to move the item to action. The motion was unanimously approved.

Motion XXXIII-33: By Senator Borg, second by Senator Albrecht, to approve the graduation rate goal of 60% as set forth in the policy proposal.

Senator Armstrong: There is no difference between the graduation rate of athletes and the student body in general.

Senator E. Thomas: The graduation rate for student-athletes is a little higher than that for all students. This has constantly been the case for several years.

Senator Dave Thomas: Does this goal apply to all students?

Senator E. Thomas: It is for students beginning as freshman at ISU.

Senator Razaki: Would you provide us with comparative numbers?

Senator Eric Thomas: I will do that.

Senator Kurtz: What uses would this be put to? We know our graduation rate is looked at by external entities.

Senator E. Thomas: We report our graduation rate for NCAA certification and to a variety of other entities. Most external entities do not ask for our graduation rate *policy*.

Senator Reid: Since there is a relationship between increasing retention rates and increasing graduation

rates, will there be pressure to decrease our academic standards? Perhaps we should draft a policy on the quality of our academic standards.

Senator Goldfarb: I think we should tie this in with our admissions policies, but a high graduation rate does not mean a decrease in standards.

Senator El-Zanati: Have we gone above a graduation rate of 55%?

Senator Bragg: We are at about 56% reflecting the changes in student demographics. Graduation rates are relatively stable and we do not expect to see large shifts. We could add about 10% to this figure because about 10% of those who transfer from ISU graduate from another institution.

Senator Boschini: Our graduation rate also includes those who come in for enhancement, but not to graduate.

Senator Reid: I think we should look at increasing our standards for our teachers, not just for the students admitted.

Vote on Graduation Rate Goal Policy: The Senate unanimously approved the Graduation Rate Goal Policy with the stated graduation rate goal of 60%.

02.08.01.01 Proposal for Tiered Program Admissions (Academic Affairs Committee)

02.08.01.01A Proposal for B.A./B.S. Degree in University Studies (Academic Affairs Committee)

02.08.01.01B Proposal for Renaming General Studies to Interdisciplinary Studies and Increasing GPA Requirement (Academic Affairs Committee)

Senator Borg: Academic Affairs is presenting three proposals as information items that are related to each other: a Tiered Admissions Policy, revisions to the General Studies Program and a proposed University Studies Degree. In order for the Tiered Admissions Policy to work, we would need to create a University Studies Degree Program. The General Studies proposal involves increasing the GPA requirement for that program from 2.5 to 2.75 and renaming the program Interdisciplinary Studies.

Senator E. Thomas: These proposals are an effort to allow the current General Studies Program to have a higher level of quality and to provide every student with an alternative degree path under the University Studies Degree Program.

Senator Crothers: The University Studies proposal states that a student with more than 60 credit hours and not admitted to a major would be in this program. Sixty hours in what?

Senator E. Thomas: Sixty hours in anything. A student would be a candidate for the University Studies Degree if that student acquires sixty or more hours, but is not admitted to a major. If they were not accepted into a major after acquiring sixty hours, they would go into the University Studies Program. These students could not remain in the existing General Student classification.

Senator Kording: Who must approve the plan of study?

Senator E. Thomas: The faculty advisor for the University Studies Program.

Senator Kording: Is there a parallel program in Graduate Studies?

Senator E. Thomas: There is no such degree offered to students in graduate school.

Senator Kording: If a student applied to a program and was denied admission, could that student appeal the decision?

Senator E. Thomas: Departments can set their own standards for admission into their programs.

Senator Goldfarb: There is always administrative recourse. A student could appeal to the college dean, the Provost and Undergraduate Studies.

Senator Kording: Page 1 of the catalog copy states that a student must meet the minimum admission/retention standards of a major. Might this University Studies Degree be a disincentive to supply resources to support student demand for other programs?

Senator E. Thomas: Some departments cannot accommodate all of those that apply to their programs, but this certainly is not an incentive to exclude students.

Senator D. Thomas: Would this two-tiered policy exceed the current two-tiered policies already in place in certain departments, such as having a requirement of 40 hours instead of 60?

Senator E. Thomas: If a department has a requirement of a few more than 60 hours or a few less in their tiered process, there should be no problem.

Senator Ballard: Would students in Interdisciplinary Studies be able to enroll in other courses?

Senator E. Thomas: They could enroll in all courses except those that are major blocked.

Senator Pollack: The proposal says that additional resources and staff will not be required. Would it be of value to add more resources to make more students successful in their first 60 hours by providing more academic support so that they would not encounter the problem of not being allowed into a major?

Senator E. Thomas: We currently have very good student support through the University College, University Center for Learning Assistance and the Academic Advisement Center. In fact, if an advisor sees that a student is not doing well, the advisor will contact that student and assign the student to tutorial support.

Senator Baum: What number of students will the University Studies Program serve?

Senator E. Thomas: We don't want to see many students in this situation, but we project that about several hundred students will be in the program.

Senator Bathauer: The Curriculum Committee handles these types of issues. Would there be only one person who would decide with the student the course of study in the University Studies Program?

Senator E. Thomas: Yes, the faculty advisor.

Senator Bathauer: Is that amendable during the course of study?

Senator E. Thomas: Students, once they enter this program, may choose to go into another major.

Senator Bathauer: What effect will this have on the current General Education classes? It is already very hard to get into those classes. Is there a possibility of adding more sections?

Senator E. Thomas: There would be no impact on the General Education Program. It would not be to the advantage of those students to take more General Education classes.

Senator McNaught: Would a re-enrolled student be able to get into this program?

Senator E. Thomas: I would advise those students to select a major. However, if they have no major, they would come in under University Studies.

Senator Deutsch: Do the individual plans for coursework have any coherence?

Senator E. Thomas: For that aspect, there would be a heavy reliance on the faculty advisor.

Senator Deutsch: Wouldn't it be better to develop general models for courses of study?

Senator E. Thomas: Students could enter from a broad range of programs, too broad to capture in general models.

Senator Armstrong: Would you provide us with the number of programs that use the two-tiered process and the number of students that are turned away?

Senator E. Thomas: I will try to gather that information.

Senator Ballard: How many faculty advisors are in Interdisciplinary Studies and University Studies?

Senator E. Thomas: In Interdisciplinary Studies, as in the current General Studies Program, there would be one faculty advisor. For University Studies, it would depend on the number of students in the program.

Senator Ballard: How are these programs looked upon by Graduate Studies?

Senator McGinnis: A person with a general degree would have a harder time getting into graduate school.

Senator White: I would note that students from undergraduate majors are accepted in different graduate majors, but they would need to make up any deficiencies.

Senator Fowles: Would the departments have to supervise this program?

Senator E. Thomas: The program would be a University-wide program and not require any departmental oversight. We would try not to put any additional burden on departments.

Senator Fowles: Would the faculty advisor be the one evaluating the capstone project?

Senator E. Thomas: The evaluation would be overseen by the faculty advisor that oversees the program; in some cases, the faculty advisor may oversee the project directly, but it could be someone else in other cases. There is a very wide range given for the nature of the capstone experience.

Senator Mitchell: Would this program be recognized for financial aid?

Senator E. Thomas: Yes, like any other program, but this degree would not position you as well for the future.

Senator Mitchell: What is the difference between the Interdisciplinary Studies Program and students designing their own majors?

Senator E. Thomas: Students can design their own major under the Interdisciplinary Studies Program (or the current General Studies Program).

Senator Brown: If the University Studies Degree provides a safety net, will departments be inclined to raise admission standards?

Senator Goldfarb: Departments don't raise standards in a vacuum. Those proposals go through the college deans and Undergraduate Studies. Our goal is not to exclude more students, but to have strong programs.

Senator Mamarchev: Under the necessary prerequisites for tiered admissions, would you consider including Student Counseling Services as an avenue to assist students?

Senator E. Thomas: Yes, we could include that.

Senator Reid: The key to the University Studies Program is advisement. Not every advisor, however, is competent in every major. Is there any way of allowing a student to change advisors or be assigned to an advisor who knows more about certain programs?

Senator E. Thomas: The current General Studies Program has a committee that plans and oversees the program. I could see having a similar committee to provide expertise for University Studies.

Senator Walker: On Table IV-1 of the University Studies proposal, you project that the number of students in this major by the fifth year will be 475. Has the University College thoroughly looked at the need for additional resources?

Senator E. Thomas: Only the capstone component would require additional resources. We will try to do this within existing means or with as few additional resources as possible.

The Senate ended its information session on the three proposals. The proposals will come before the Senate again on November 7, 2001 as action items.

Communications

10.11.01.03 Sense of Senate Resolution: Nine- or Twelve-Month Payroll Option (Senator Crothers)

Motion XXXIII-34: by Senator Crothers, second by Senator Reid, to approve a Sense of the Senate Resolution that offers the faculty of ISU the choice of receiving their pay in nine- or twelve-month pay periods.

Senator Kording: Wasn't this previously discussed and they decided that they were going to do this?

Senator Bragg: This was brought up in a Senate Executive Committee meeting last year and we looked at what would be involved in modifying the current system to offer this option. I am distributing the report that came back to us in March. It is technically possible to change the current system, but not economically feasible. It would be better to install a new payroll system. We are currently looking at our employment data base. Human Resources supports nine months over twelve months.

Senator Howard: At the university at which I was employed before coming here, we were able to give faculty a choice, but we did not use an expensive system; we used a simple Excel spread sheet to figure it out. We should consider other options.

Senator Reid: What is the cost of a new system?

Senator Bragg: The cost is \$1 million for the software and implementation.

Senator Reid: I would not support this resolution at this time because of the cost. With the possible budget restrictions, we have to consider whether this would fall within our budgetary priorities.

Senator Kurtz: In the course of reviewing the minutes in the ISU archives of the body that was formerly the Senate, the University Council, I found that a Sense of the University Council Resolution was passed on this issue at least thirty years ago. It is time to take this out of the resolution stage and put it into the implementation phase in whatever timeframe possible.

Senator Landau: Can the existing software accomplish a nine- or twelve-month choice for straightforward contracts?

Senator Bragg: If faculty are not paid over multiple cost centers and within one fiscal year, that could happen; but only a small percentage of faculty fall into that category.

Senator Goldfarb: There is complete support in administration for a new payroll system. It is an action item in *Educating Illinois*. We just need to figure out a timeline.

Senator Lindblom: What is the benefit of a twelve-month option? I can get paid over nine months and place that money in an interest bearing account rather than having the university hold on to it. Also, the ISU Credit Union can provide faculty with a twelve-month pay period now.

Senator Goldfarb: That also means that you cannot go into that Credit Union account at anytime.

Senator Fowles: We have a top notch Applied Computer Science Department. Why can't we do the programming in-house? When evaluating costs, consider what it costs to send health insurance bills out over the summer and to monitor those payments.

Vote on Sense of Senate Resolution: The Senate voted on the Sense of the Senate Resolution to offer faculty a nine- or twelve-month pay period option. The Senate passed the resolution. By hand vote, the vote was thirty yes votes, one no vote and twelve abstentions.

Adjournment

Motion XXXIII-35: To adjourn by Senator Borg, second by Senator Albrecht. The motion was unanimously approved by standing vote.

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