

Academic Senate Minutes
Wednesday, March 9, 2005
(Approved)

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Lane Crothers.

Roll Call

Secretary Paul Borg called the roll and declared a quorum.

Approval of Minutes of February 23, 2005 – To be approved at the meeting of March 30, 2005***Chairperson's Remarks***

Senator Crothers: This “Presentation by State Representatives” was placed on the agenda as a place holder. State representatives will attend the Senate meeting on March 30, 2005. Again, this year, Dan Brady will speak to the Senate, as will possibly two other representatives. Since we are accommodating their schedules, it is possible that that date will shift.

After this meeting, there are only three Senate meetings left for this Senate. What that means is that business that needs to get conducted needs to get to the Senate floor, which means it needs to get to the Executive Committee by Monday, March 21, 2005. Also, I need Administrative Affairs to tell me during their report that they are ready to present the Presidential Commentary Report to the Executive Committee on March 21, 2005.

For your information, the Athletic Director search continues. There were approximately 40 applications and that search committee will be meeting soon. Also, there is a special task force to address some of the recent changes to the NCAA rules governing student athletes. Some of that material may well be coming to the Senate.

Student Government Association President's Remarks

Senator Rinker: I would like to introduce to you our new under-represented senator, Kimberly Ewald. She is a first year student here and is an art major with a minor in sociology. We will have the gazebo on the quad tomorrow; hopefully, it will facilitate face-to-face interaction with the students. We hope to keep our constituents better informed about our initiatives. The SGA has a newly elected President of the Student Body, Josh Garrison. Josh served as an Academic Senator last year and he was Secretary of the Student Government Assembly. Barry Tolchin was elected as Student Trustee. Approximately 3,500 students voted. SGA will have its “passing of the gavel” on April 10. After that date, Josh Garrison will assume this seat.

Senator Crothers: This has been, without question, the most involved and the most active student body ever. Obviously, the student leadership deserves a great deal of credit for that.

Administrators' Remarks

President Al Bowman: *Absent.*

Provost Remarks:

Provost Presley: The applications for the new class, as expected, have pretty much leveled out, with a couple of exceptions. Minority student applications are up 11% and minority admissions are up 21% for our next freshman class. The minority applicants are presenting with really outstanding academic preparation. Our enrollment confirmation deposits are up almost 300 over last year. The Military Call-Up Task Force, which developed the withdrawal/reenrollment checklist on the web, has updated contact information and policy related to those students called up for military service. A letter will be sent from President Bowman extending to these students

the sense of the University's pride in them. A letter from the Office of Enrollment Management and Academic Services will follow offering assistance in reenrollment. The task force is also going to do further research on the status of these students. We continue to be amazed by their numbers and their varying circumstances.

We have an ongoing initiative that we hope will cut down on the numbers of students who are still listed as General Students who are in their junior and senior years. It is becoming a serious issue for us. One of the issues aligned with this is that when students go out on academic probation, they are readmitted as General Students. For the first time, we began requiring those students to submit a plan for academic success before we would consider their case for readmission.

Senator Borg: Is the self-evaluation required or is it optional?

Provost Presley: Right now, it is optional.

Senator Borg: Is that something we may want to require?

Provost Presley: I think that we will be coming back with that once we have a little more experience with it.

Senator Koutsky: Has the military assistance web site been launched yet?

Provost Presley: The web site is up and running in beta form; they are still working on it. It is on the Enrollment Management web site.

Vice President of Student Affairs

Helen Mamarchev: Yesterday, we hosted one of the trustees for the day as part of our Trustee in Residence program. We were able to go on a tour of Wilkins Hall and see the progress being made there. We are looking forward to the completion and reopening of Wilkins in the fall. In the Bone Student Center, McAlister's Deli is well on its way to being completed; we are hoping to have an opening on March 29th. We have lots of students going on organized spring break trips; our alternative trips are full and those students will be leaving shortly.

Senator Reid: What are some of the alternative spring break trips?

Dr. Mamarchev: One group is going to Florida, one to North Carolina; I believe that that is the one that is going to work with Habitat for Humanity. There are several others.

Senator Reid: Are all of these trips essentially to help others?

Dr. Mamarchev: Yes.

Senator Reid: That is wonderful.

Dr. Mamarchev: They will be doing reflection pieces throughout—journaling. When they come back, we will have debriefing and reflection sessions.

Vice President of Finance and Planning Steve Bragg: *Absent.*

Committee Reports

Academic Affairs Committee

Senator Reid: The committee met with the Provost to study the School Designation Policy, which was written a

couple of years ago. The Provost made some suggestions for rewriting it and we have made revisions. It will come before the Senate at the next meeting. We also discussed the 124-hour rule and we are planning to request that the Provost put together a pilot study of redundancies of content, specifically within the Teacher Education programs. We also discussed enrollment management. There are over 2,000 undergraduates who are in General Studies and many of these are juniors and seniors. This is a major problem. If they do not get into a major, they do not graduate. Even though the requirement for graduation is a 2.0, they need a much higher GPA in many majors. We are going to request relevant statistics from the Provost's Office so that we can begin to look into that. Finally, we began discussing recommendations for the distance education philosophy. We hope to bring it before the Senate soon.

Senator Jerich: Are you looking at redundancies within the context of the College of Education's General Education requirements or the academic major course requirements?

Senator Reid: We are asking for a pilot study that would look in detail at redundancies of content that might be eliminated and also redundancies between professional education courses and teacher education courses that might allow for a reduction of hours. The study would look at accreditation pressures carefully and perhaps benchmark with other universities.

Senator Jerich: I serve on NCATE and one of the ongoing issues is concern about the redundancy of General Education requirements within Teacher Education programs. We are looking to see if some of the other requirements could take the place of initial General Studies courses.

Senator Reid: We have just done that in terms of General Education and reduced the requirements by about six courses. Right now, we are going to look at specific departments, but I will take your recommendation to the committee.

Administrative Affairs and Budget Committee

Senator Gamage: The committee reviewed the commentary on the President's performance. We revised the Administrative Selection Policy based on the comments we received from the Senate when this was an Information Item. We are hoping to bring it as an Action Item for the next meeting.

Faculty Affairs Committee

Senator Wylie: The committee had some follow up discussion with Josie Evola. We are continuing work on the recruitment and retention document.

Planning and Finance Committee

Senator Waterstraat: The committee finished with its interviews of the vice presidents concerning budget strategies. Our last interview was with Vice President Presley. He gave an overview of the process that is generally a very open one. On March 22 and 23, the deans will be presenting their budgets at open meetings. There were some questions about three- to five-year plans: why are we actually doing this when there isn't anything to plan with? The Provost responded that you never know when you might get funding or have an opportunity to make a presentation to receive funding. We asked him what the major issues were that his unit would face over the next five years. He said our obligation is to assist students to complete degrees within a four year period. He calculated the average number of hours of the graduates within a randomly selected department; the average graduate had 152 hours. The question is 'is that good or is that bad' meaning if a student is graduating with 152 hours, did we did get 32 extra hours of revenue or did they consume resources that we could have spent elsewhere. In addition, he indicated that his area is looking at some entrepreneurial efforts in offering classes—in a sense, “a-pay-as-you-go”. If you attract students, those students generate revenue. That revenue instead, of going back to the University, would go back directly to that department, although there are some controls that would be put on it. In a sense, that will justify the existence of summer school. He believes that in order to expand in the future, it will

have to be a pay-as-you-go program; these models may be our future as an institution from a planning and finance perspective.

Rules Committee

Senator Hammel: The committee had two main items of discussion. The first was a report on the Consensual Relations Policy, which was added to the Faculty Code of Ethics last year. There is a Consensual Relations Policy at the University in general, although it exempts both the faculty and faculty associates because of their special status. It requests that each of those groups have their own consensual relations policy. The faculty have that, but we were not sure if the faculty associates (the faculty members for the lab schools) had such a policy in place. I met with Bob Dean, Director of Lab Schools, and Senator Trissel; they have gone through their process and made some changes to their professional standards document that seemed to be quite appropriate. As soon as I get the official document, we will be sending a memo to the Executive Committee about that. We believe that it is not something that the Senate has to approve; it is a code of ethics that they approve themselves and is a part of their professional standards. We also discussed briefly the mass e-mail that went out on Tuesday to tenure, tenure track and non-tenure track faculty asking for their comments on the current Faculty Code of Ethics; the message directs all faculty members to a web page where they can submit comments. We will be accepting comments through March 28, the week after spring break. After spring break, we should be able to do a similar e-mail to students to get their responses, particularly to the section that deals with faculty relations with students.

IBHE-FAC Report/Letter to State Legislators

Professor Curt White, IBHE-FAC Representative: The last Faculty Advisory Council meeting was at Western Illinois University in Macomb. Former Provost of ISU, now WIU President, Al Goldfarb, sends his regards. For most of the FAC meeting, we talked with Senator John Sullivan about his perception of what is happening with pension reform. His feeling is, especially given the kind of lack of response from Madigan, that it is extremely likely that something is going to come out of the pension reform discussion. Many of the recommendations coming out of that study group are very extreme and none of them are good from our point of view. One that he thinks is still in play is limiting adjustments for inflation after retirement to 2%; they are presently at 3%. This would not affect people who are currently in the system, but, if this passes, people who are hired into the system after its passage would be affected. Senator Sullivan also stated that the elimination of the Money Purchase Formula from SURS is still in play, as well as raising the retirement age without penalty.

I have not sensed, even on this campus, a lot of concern or anxiety about these proposals and I think that there should be. It is true that nobody who is presently working here will be affected by these decisions, but it is certainly going to affect our ability to recruit faculty in the future who will be affected. I have an online address at which the University Professionals of Illinois have a form letter opposing pension reform; that address is www.upilocal4100.org. You can download that letter, revise it if you like, and pass it on to your colleagues.

House Bill 750 is still alive in one form, in so far as it is being talked about a lot by senators and representatives. Senator Sullivan was able to tell us that Representative Rick Winkle of Champaign, representing the district wherein the University of Illinois is located, has created an amendment. As I understand it, there are only amendments at this time because, in reality, there is no actual bill. So, everyone is going to be proposing amendments to something that doesn't actually exist and, eventually, they will choose one of the amendment forms as the actual bill.

Representative Winkle's amendment, which is similar to others though less extreme, would raise income taxes less. There would be no expansion of the sales tax; it would affect property taxes in a modest way. Also, his amendment includes higher education. HB 750, as it was first amended, was only for K-12. If you have an opportunity to write to either Representative Brady, Senator Brady or Senator Rutherford, it would make sense to urge them to support Rick Winkle's amendment or a version thereof. Senator Sullivan asked us, and these are

almost literally his words, ‘What explains this Governor’s assault on higher education?’ It is interesting to see that even outside of academia, the Governor’s behavior concerning higher education is perceived as an assault.

In the afternoon, we discussed a faculty-driven higher education summit, which will be unique in itself. It will take place in Peoria on May 9th and there has been a lot of interest expressed by the business community, as well as by various politicians. Ray LaHood has expressed some interest in coming. I also have a draft letter that can serve as a model for support of a 1% increase to the overall higher education budget. I will leave a copy of this with Cynthia to send to you all and maybe we can get some letters going out to the Governor supporting a stronger budget for the coming year.

Again, our FAC Chairperson, Alan Karnes, has been meeting with IBHE staff about lobbying strategies and activities. As I said last time, I would welcome any information that either Student Affairs or anyone else has about what our particular strategy is going to be in Springfield. I don’t have much information about what our University is planning to do in that respect. Our next meeting is later this month at Wesleyan. The IBHE-FAC meeting for May, which unfortunately occurs after the end of the semester, will be here at ISU on May 20.

Senator Reid: Would you remind me what the Money Purchase Formula is?

Professor White: Rather than taking the highest four years of your salary and averaging them out and that is what you would get, the Money Purchase Formula will look at the entire amount of money that you have invested and the entire amount of money that the State has put in. They will compare that sum to certain actuarial predictions and base your retirement income on those predictions. The problem for them is that the Money Purchase Formula works in our interest because the actuarial tables are predicting that people are going to die before they actually do. So, we benefit from the fact that the actuarial charts are conservative and people are getting more money out of the system.

Senator Reid: This has allowed a number of people to retire after about 30 years. Does this now mean that 80% would now have to work 34 or 35 years?

Professor White: I can’t really answer that, but, for all intents and purposes, anyone who is hired in the last 20 years is going to retire under the Money Purchase Formula because it works out better for them.

Senator Crothers: While they are claiming that none of this has any impact on current employees, at least one version, coming from Bill Scott in the College of Business, is suggesting that the elimination of the money purchase language may affect current employees.

Professor White: That would be a disaster.

Senator Crothers: I have not heard anything about the higher education summit. Can you tell me where it comes from and who will attend?

Professor White: It is entirely an idea of the Faculty Advisory Council. The plan is to invite people in business and politics, as well as faculty members. The media would, of course, follow. It would be a summit that would be more under the control of faculty; we are hoping to get some visibility for certain things. The chair of our committee is basically putting it all together.

Senator Crothers: The Council of Illinois University Senates will meet in April; we have not come to an agreement on a date yet. Obviously, these issues regarding retirement are going to be high on our agenda as well.

Senator DeSantis: Did the conversations concerning changes to the pension system concern only the SURS traditional retirement plan or do they go across the board to the self-managed plan as well?

Professor White: I don't think that anyone is talking about, at this point, taking away the self-managed plan. They are talking about taking away the Money Purchase Formula.

Senator DeSantis: Does the self-managed plan have anything to do with those formulas?

Professor White: No, so that wouldn't be touched by the money purchase recommendations.

Senator Hammel: Do the state legislators understand that pensioners do not pay into social security?

Professor White: The state legislators don't even understand that there is something called an *Illinois Commitment*. They do not even know the principles and values to which they are most committed in higher education. The idea that they know something about the minutia of our private lives is unlikely.

Senator Radhakrishnan: So far, they are paying 8% interest for the money we have invested in the retirement system. Is it likely that they may lower that rate of interest?

Professor White: For future hires, yes. One of the things that has been proposed is a decrease from 8% to 6%.

Action Items:

03.01.05.01 Withdrawal from Course Policy Revisions (Academic Affairs Committee)

Senator Crothers: You have before you the Withdrawal from a Course Policy revisions which we discussed vigorously two weeks ago and then tabled. Therefore, it requires first a motion to remove it from the table.

Motion XXXVI-49: By Senator Reid, seconded by Senator Wylie, to untable the Withdrawal from a Course Policy. The Senate unanimously approved the motion.

Senator Reid: The version you have in front of you is slightly changed simply in order to improve the grammar. In #1, I would like to add one additional change. After the parenthesis, change "and" to "to", so that we now have, "1. Using the registration system to drop the course". The question was brought up last time about whether it was possible to have an e-mail notification to faculty when a student has dropped a course. I have been told that the programming costs would be prohibitive to do that. However, the Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management and Academic Services is willing to send more frequent class lists. Otherwise, professors will have to use the portal to check their lists or ask the department secretary to check the mainframe to check their lists.

Motion XXXVI-50: By Senator Reid to approve the revised Withdrawal from a Course Policy. There was no debate and the Senate unanimously approved the policy as revised.

04.09.03.06 Academic Progress Alert System (Distributed to the Senate on 2/23/05)

Motion XXXVI-51: By Senator Reid to approve the Academic Progress Alert System.

Senator Crothers: The question before us is whether or not to continue the Academic Progress Alert.

Senator Reid: Both the faculty and students of the committee strongly support this being continued. The hard evidence of the effect of the system is limited. The only data we have about whether or not this improves grades is a study done by Senator Gamage in the fall of 1999 of over 6,000 students in over 22 courses, many of them with many sections. He found no evidence that the APA improved grades. The other issue we considered was to perhaps study student perceptions to see if they see this as helpful. Unfortunately, a valid study of student

perceptions, i.e., that which would ensure a representative sample, is costly and prohibitive. So, the major argument that I would make in support of the progress alert is in terms of University values. The values and mission of the University call for individual attention to students. The progress alert allows students, if they are freshmen, to make informed choices about whether to stay in a course or what they need to do to succeed early enough to make a difference. I would ask you to consider voting in favor of continuing the alert based its importance as an expression of our values.

Senator Borg: I do plan to support this effort. I would also like to note that this would be grounds for us to reconsider our course numeration system. Rather than 100 level courses representing freshman classes, we have them representing sophomore and often junior level work. Prohibitive costs have always been one of the objections to revising the course numbering system, but if this particular policy is meant to target freshmen, then I suggest that the courses that target them actually be freshman courses.

Senator Plantholt: I plan to support this; however, I am wondering if it is possible to request within the policy a review of the system in three years. I would like to have a study that I can believe in, in which at least students are surveyed.

Senator Crothers: It is certainly within the realm of this body's authority to move a friendly or unfriendly amendment adding language to ask for a review of the policy again in a certain number of years. How effectively that review gets taken forward in three or four years is a fair question as well, but we certainly have the authority to instruct that it be done.

Senator Plantholt: Would you consider it a friendly amendment to ask that it be reviewed in three years and have included a student survey in that study?

Senator Crothers: I am reluctant to suggest the mechanism of the evaluation within the policy, but it is certainly appropriate to ask for a review.

Provost Presley: Paid for by whom?

Senator Crothers: The review will be conducted logically by the Academic Affairs Committee; as to what the nature of that review is, as I suggested, that can vary quite dramatically.

Provost Presley: I hope that my objections to some of the reviews that were suggested were not the basis of misinterpretation, which came out as labeling this as too expensive. My objection was to some of the things that were suggested. Some people said that the only thing that they would believe would be a double blind test in which some students received this alert and some did not. I am not going to undertake from my office any kind of study that denies that kind of individual attention to half the freshmen.

Senator Crothers: Would you accept, Senator Reid, the language that Senator Plantholt suggested as a friendly amendment?

Senator Reid: Yes, I would.

Senator Gamage: I am the one who suggested a double blind study, but it is unethical to do a double blind study in this setting. It would deny a group of students whatever the possible benefits that they would receive from the alert. Therefore, I suggested stopping this for one semester and then reviewing the grade distribution. Then you could see if there is a decline in grades without the alert.

Senator Crothers: That kind of study, if the proposal with the friendly amendment is accepted, would have to be

considered by the Academic Affairs Committee three years from now.

Senator Hammel: If we are not necessarily concerned about whether or not it is effective but whether or not it is appreciated, then that is a pretty easy thing to determine. If students appreciate getting this kind of feedback, I would be willing to continue to do that. It is not that difficult. On the other hand, if we are doing something that does take a fair bit of time for some faculty members and is, essentially, not appreciated and not really wanted by students, then I don't see any reason to continue to do it.

Senator Gamage: Right now, we don't know if the students appreciate this or not.

Senator Mohammadi: Was there a stated objective of the Academic Progress Alert System when it was initiated? If what we are doing is consistent with the objective, then it is fine. If it is not, then it needs to be revised.

Senator Crothers: I am sure that there was a values statement behind it.

Senator Mohammadi: Was it for the purpose of improving grades or was it just for the purpose of informing the students?

Senator Crothers: It was informing the students with the hope that that would improve grades, but there was no promise that it would.

Senator Brinton: I think that you will find that opinions vary. I recommend that we, as student senators, use the list serve now in place as a resource to find out what our constituents think.

Senator Mahoney: I also think that there will be wide support for all undergraduate courses to be included in the APA System.

Senator Drew: This system currently only targets freshmen; I think that it should be for every student here. I am concerned about my grades and a lot of people are. I think that it would help juniors and seniors immensely as they approach graduation.

Senator Tolchin: I would offer to the Senate that it has been my experience both individually and in talking with other students that this is an invaluable resource, especially to freshmen who are confused and don't know the proper procedures to determine what their grade is. I would offer that it is absolutely pertinent to this University and to the document of *Educating Illinois* that we continue this program.

Senator Koutsky: I think that the alert eases freshman into an academic process that is different than what they are used to. I think that it is certainly valuable and helpful.

Senator Reid: It might be appropriate to ask the Academic Affairs Committee next year to at least consider the issue of extending these alerts to all students.

Senator Boser: Have we agreed that it is to come back in 2009?

Senator Crothers: That was a friendly amendment, so it is structurally part of the proposal. If you wish to offer a motion to strike the amendment, you are welcome to do so.

Motion XXXVI-52: By Senator Boser, seconded by Senator Tolchin, to strike the friendly amendment.

Senator Crothers: If we strike the amendment, it will become a permanent policy and subject only to the policy review cycle to which every other policy is subject.

Senator Mahoney: What will happen if we strike this? Will the alert be for 100 level courses only as it is now?

Senator Crothers: That is correct; but you are not going to get more than that now under any circumstances. I assure you that if you try to expand it to the 200, 300 and 400 level courses, we will vote the entire policy down.

Senator O'Donnell: What is the review cycle—when will it come up for review?

Senator Crothers: It is a five-year review cycle.

Call the Question: The question was called by Senator Boser on the motion to strike the friendly amendment. There was no objection to calling the question.

Vote on Motion XXXVI-52: The majority of the Senate voted in favor of the motion to strike the friendly amendment and the amendment was struck.

Vote on Motion XXXVI-51: The majority of the Senate voted in the affirmative to approve the Academic Alert System as it is currently constituted, with no revision; Senator Gamage abstained. The Academic Alert System, unrevised, was, therefore, approved by the Senate.

Communications:

02.24.05.01 University Service Awards 2005-2006 – Call for Nominations

03.02.05.01 Association of Latin American Students - Visiting Speaker: Marie Arana

Senator Crothers: You have in your packets the annual call for nominations for University Service Awards. You should feel free to promulgate this widely among your faculty. You also have an announcement of a visiting speaker, Marie Arana, from the Association of Latin American Students. We would also hope that you would widely disseminate the announcement of her upcoming presentation.

Election for Mayor of Normal

Senator Koutsky: I wanted to remind everyone that the election for the Mayor of Normal is on April 5th. Both candidates have been on campus and spoken with students. We ask faculty to encourage all students to vote. Students living on campus would vote in the Bone Student Center.

Adjournment