

Academic Senate Executive Committee Minutes
Wednesday, September 3, 2008
(Approved)

Call to Order

Senate Chairperson Holland called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

Present: Paul Borg, Farzaneh Fazel, Dan Holland, Susan Kalter, Jacqueline Krug, Kathleen Lonbom, Ted Mason, Marielle Ruscitti, Matt Spialek, Ed Stewart, Provost Sheri Everts, President Al Bowman

Approval of Executive Committee Minutes of August 18, 2008

Motion XXXX-5: By Senator Stewart, seconded by Senator Fazel, to approve the Executive Committee Minutes of August 18, 2008. The minutes were unanimously approved.

Distributed Communications:

08.29.08.01 *From Ted Mason, Student Body President/SGA Officers: Academic Advisors Assessment Committee Recommendations (Distributed to Academic Affairs Committee)*

Senator Mason: *Educating Illinois'* Goal 1, Strategy 3, talks about finding a way to assess academic advisors. When we talk to students, there are always complaints about them being here for an extra semester because their advisors told them to take the wrong classes and things of that nature. I have already talked to the Provost about this. Basically, we are asking the Academic Senate to create a task force to first develop a survey to see exactly how many students have been affected negatively or positively. Then we ask that they research other schools to see if there is a system that we can implement here with which students can actually evaluate their advisors.

Senator Fazel: When I read this, it came across as 'who is not doing their job?' My suggestion is that it be a little more positive in terms of 'we would like to have an assessment to improve the advisement process'.

Senator Stewart: And possibly a new training system so that new advisors know about the options for recommending different courses.

Senator Kalter: I was wondering if you [Mason and Provost] had talked about the Academic Advisement Advisory Council. They have a website and I can provide you with that web address. That group is pursuing professional development training. They have already surveyed advisement and they are in the process of surveying deans and chairs; they will soon survey students.

Provost Everts: We discussed that very thing and I asked if that was something that Jonathan Rosenthal had already initiated. It is, indeed, the case that they want to ensure that there is an assessment policy and plan.

Senator Stewart: Perhaps there is something already in place that satisfies the needs that the Student Government Association (SGA) has expressed, so there won't be any need to distribute this to the Academic Affairs Committee.

Senator Borg: Student Government changes every year, so they often don't have an institutional memory. So let me suggest that we respond to this by saying that the process is ongoing and that we perhaps deal with some communication issues rather than with the issues that you describe in your memo.

Senator Kalter: There is a student on the Advisement Advisory Council. Our department advisor, Mark Vegter, said that he said that he would be contacting you [to find out which student will serve this year]. One of the problems may have been that last year's student member was a grad student, so that might not have been optimal for stressing the undergraduate advisement point of view. Perhaps having more than one student on the committee would be an option.

Provost Everts: Jon also mentioned that if you would like to have some additional focus groups associated with this for students to address some of the issues and concerns, they would be very happy to offer that.

Senator Mason: So is this then being taken off the table or are we sending this to the Academic Affairs Committee?

Senator Borg: What kind of communication do you want from this I think is the question. If, indeed, the process is ongoing, you don't want to start the process all over again, but, rather, make use of the process that is there. What kind of response would you feel comfortable with?

Senator Mason: I would like for the Academic Affairs Committee to at least look at perhaps benchmarking and creating a survey to see what the problems really are.

Senator Borg: It seems to me, though, that that is duplicating the procedure that is already going on.

Senator Holland: Maybe we need to know exactly what is going on. I know that there is ongoing training of advisors in terms of professional development.

Provost Everts: The Council has taken up exactly the issues that you have discussed. Something additional would be focus groups and gathering of information. Sometimes a survey is viewed as having punitive ramifications, as opposed to gathering information on what might be more helpful.

Senator Kalter: Perhaps it might be good idea to have the Academic Affairs Committee directly communicate with the Council.

Provost Everts: I think that's a good idea.

Senator Stewart: Perhaps it would be helpful for Jonathan to enumerate to the full Senate what the committee is doing so that it is communicated throughout the university.

Senator Holland: We will invite him to the Senate fairly early on since we don't have much business at this time.

The Student Government Association's memo concerning student advisement will be distributed to the Academic Affairs Committee.

08.25.08.01 From Provost Sheri Everts: Distance Education Task Force Formation

Provost Everts: I think I spoke about this at the Senate meeting. I just wanted to underscore, again, the notation that in moving forward with *Educating Illinois*, it time for us to take a look at distance education. We want to ensure that quality and strategic choices for distance education are made throughout the campus. There is wide representation on this task force of 25 members, including two students. Thank you, Senator Mason, for being willing to serve. There is also a graduate student as well. (Senator Holland has also agreed to serve on the task force.) The first meeting is tomorrow.

Senator Fazel: Last year, one of the Planning and Finance Committee's recommendations dealt with planning for alternative programming, specifically, to increase the offerings for distance education. Would this committee address that?

Provost Everts: It would certainly address that. One of the things we have noted, thus far, is the increase in the numbers of courses that do that in an appropriate, strategic and excellent way, in keeping with academic integrity, as well as the purposeful pursuit of knowledge, in particularly targeted areas.

Senator Fazel: So would one of the outcomes be a strategic plan for distance learning?

Provost Everts: It's a possibility. I think what the task force would do instead would be to look at *Educating Illinois* and pull out the strategies that deal specifically with distance education and other additional items there that we would want to articulate.

Senator Holland: It is my understanding that, last year, the U of I's "Global University" was a complete disaster. Is

that still the case?

President Bowman: We haven't heard what the fall enrollment is, but, last year, there were less than 100 students enrolled. I think that they have spent over \$7 million in that endeavor. I think that we are doing it the right way and that is having the courses evolve from the departments; that is a better way to match offerings with demand.

Senator Lonbom: I would just say that UIUC's Graduate School of Library and Information Science has a really successful distance education program. Hundreds of people have gone through that program. Of course, that is very discipline specific and stands separate.

Senator Fazel: Would you be looking at specific programs or adding programs?

Provost Everts: We will be meeting for the first time tomorrow. The charge addresses three different goals. One is curriculum: whether or not there are specific issues associated with those areas that departments and units determine are areas in which distance education programs make sense. Instruction: are there recommended types of majors with offerings in which it makes sense to add additional distance education courses? Then the policies associated with it: there are so many policies associated with growing distance education courses. Are all of those in place? The task force will look at all of that.

Senator Fazel: At a professional conference, a faculty member from another university talked about the MBA distance education program that they offer, which is open internationally. She said that it was a great source of income. Will this new group look into those sorts of those things and will it ask the faculty-at-large for its input?

Provost Everts: There will be opportunities for faculty across the campus to provide input to the task group, so there will be focus groups associated with that.

Update on Dress Code Status

Senator Ruscitti: I e-mailed all of the student leaders associated with departments within the College of Business that were closely related to marketing. I contacted Dane Ramirez, who is the President of Delta Sigma Pi. He said that the majority of the members think that the dress code gives the college an elite image, so they are in favor of it. However, fewer individuals say that it bridges on infringement of student rights and have concerns about the issue of money to buy clothes and for dry cleaning. These are really the same mixed reviews that we have all been hearing about. The President of the AMA said that there are mixed feelings, but that the majority of students said that they liked dressing up for class because it would build their wardrobes for their future careers. However, some members asked why they could not have the same comfort level as other students. Then the President of Pi Sigma Epsilon gave me a feedback sheet. Of new students, only three did not favor it. Therefore, I think that the majority of the students are enjoying it and think that it gives the college an elite image.

President Bowman: Unless you are hearing a groundswell, I don't know if the Senate ought to weigh in.

Senator Ruscitti: I don't think it's really worth looking into any further. I think that students have gotten used to it and the few that haven't gotten used to it are going to have to wake up and realize that it is part of their life.

Senator Fazel: Could the same be accomplished by 'strongly encouraging' the students to do that. If they like to do it, no one will keep them from doing it. In that way, the students' grades will not be affected by a dress code.

Senator Krug: I agree, because if we just let this go here, other departments might see that the dress code was instituted in this department and worked it out. They may then also try to do it and that could just make more students upset. Not every major needs a dress code for students' careers after students leave here.

Senator Stewart: Some of our students are in Education, so when they are going into the public schools or when we have Saturday classes and young children are coming in, they don't "business suit up", because they are dealing with messy materials, but they do dress in business casual. I would like to weigh in on this from a public school standing. In Missouri, we were not allowed to charge lab fees or anything because it was public education and our clientele was

coming from the upper class, middle class and lower class. Some of the kids that came to us had no money at all and they were wearing the best that they could wear everyday. Students coming to ISU, which is a public university, may be coming from an economic position in which they can barely afford to do this in the first place and now, on top of that, they are being asked to buy an entire new wardrobe. Yes, once they graduate and get jobs, they will probably be able to afford it, but can they do it now? Will the extra requirement of them having to buy this wardrobe make them change their major or decide that they can not afford to come to the university?

Senator Ruscitti: I think that the money issue is the biggest issue. The majority of the responses I received are about the costs involved. I am not sure how we want to proceed with this.

Senator Stewart: Perhaps the College of Business wants to offer a clothing scholarship.

Senator Kalter: I feel that this is also an academic question. We have a policy that states that you cannot grade students on nonacademic issues and there is gray area that I think has been identified. I think the question becomes whether or not this is something that should be dealt with by the legislative part of the university, which is us, or wait for a student or a group of students to take it to the judicial processes. I have a fairly strong feeling that we should sort of jump start this and not place the burden on any individual student of having to take it through the judicial process.

Senator Holland: My biggest concerns are about it going through a judicial process and also the financial issues. We definitely have a policy that states that we cannot grade students on nonacademic criteria. I am not sure that you can make the case that wearing business casual to class is an educational issue or like wearing band uniforms or wearing safety equipment. I am not sure that the difference between wearing a shirt with a tie or without a tie is an educational issue.

Senator Stewart: There is also the case to be made that it is discriminatory because a woman's business casual wardrobe is much more expensive than a man's wardrobe of khakis and a nice shirt.

Senator Ruscitti: I don't think so.

Senator Fazel: Women have to have a greater variety of clothes.

Senator Kalter: It is also interesting that they are asking for a higher standard in the Marketing Department than people actually in marketing jobs wear from day to day.

Senator Lonbom: Does anyone know the history of the decision? I am really curious. When you say that this shouldn't be something that is a part of academic grading, I am sure that that was taken into consideration. Does anyone know how the policy was created?

Senator Fazel: The Marketing Department decided that this should be a requirement. They actually brought it to the college and asked other departments to do the same thing. However, other departments decided not to implement it.

Senator Borg: But it was a decision of the faculty?

Senator Fazel: Yes, but it was not unanimous.

Senator Borg: Most things aren't.

Senator Ruscitti: Are they allowed to just make their own decisions?

President Bowman: That's the key issue. Do the faculty in a department have the right to determine grading criteria and major requirements? So the principle for me is, do the faculty get to decide? I think the answer is, yes, so when there is disagreement, and I think you are right that we are in a gray area here, the Senate ought to encourage the faculty to work with the students to find a compromise. If they can't reach one, then I think that the faculty win. The faculty get to determine what the requirements are for the degree and I think it ends there.

Senator Borg: A curriculum, as a whole, and the component parts of it tend to be set by groups of people who consult with others and work things out. A faculty member, individually, decides how to conduct a class within the parameters that have been set in the curriculum. So the gray area might be one in which one faculty member may give five tests in a semester, while another may give four. Some faculty members may stringently uphold the dress code requirement; others may not. Those are matters that are very difficult to control. The question here is, was there anything at the curricular level that was either done inappropriately or needs to have further oversight? At this point, I am not convinced that there was.

Ms. James: I would like to speak as a student and as an employee. I can barely dress appropriately on what I earn so I can imagine how difficult it would be for some students, who are depending on student wages, to be required to dress as a business person each day they attend class. I don't think that they are ready for that.

Senator Krug: I agree with what you are saying. I had a job this summer where I had to wear dresses everyday to work. I got my first dry cleaning bill and I was just astonished.

President Bowman: We have dress codes all over campus. My old department requires students who were in practicums in the Speech and Hearing Clinic to wear business casual clothes.

Ms. James: Did they have to dress that way everyday?

President Bowman: Everyday that they had to be in the clinic, yes.

Ms. James: That's a little different.

Senator Holland: I think that possibly the Academic Affairs Committee might want to weigh in on this.

Senator Stewart: Ok, we will put this on our agenda.

Senator Ruscitti: I can make copies of the feedback sheet for the committee.

Ms. James: Could I get a copy of that for our files?

Senator Ruscitti: Sure, I will get that to you tomorrow.

Senator Kalter: I think it is a good idea for the Academic Affairs Committee to talk about it. The students who do continue to have a problem with it have the ability to take their complaints to the Student Code Enforcement and Review Board (SCERB).

Senator Holland: I would be more comfortable if they received extra credit for it, rather than having it as a requirement. In that way, students are not penalized, but can get a bonus.

Senator Fazel: I also think that they should ask them to do it without placing a grade on it, especially since some students don't mind doing it.

Senator Stewart: I just wonder about the effect this will have on the young people who we are trying to encourage to come to the university who find that they cannot afford to. Is this a way of blocking a certain class of people from the university while encouraging more middle class students?

Senator Ruscitti: We all have to make sacrifices to attend school, so if I feel like this is just another sacrifice. The career I will have, eventually, is worth two years of dressing up for Marketing classes, but that is just my opinion about this.

Senator Stewart: If you don't have the money, but you have the grades, then you should be able to come to ISU and

get your degree.

The investigation of the dress code issue was among the tasks previously referred to the Academic Affairs Committee. Senator Ruscitti's feedback, compiled from students associated with Marketing, will also be forwarded to that committee.

Academic Impact Fund

Senator Holland: Senator Kalter, you are on the committee that deals with the Academic Impact Fund. There are a number of procedural issues that the committee will need to look at. Are you on that committee, Provost Everts?

Provost Everts: Jan Murphy is on the committee and she is well aware of those issues.

Proposed Agenda for the Academic Senate Meeting on September 10, 2008:

Call to Order

Roll Call

Approval of Minutes of August 27, 2008

Chairperson's Remarks

Student Body President's Remarks

Administrators' Remarks

President Al Bowman

Provost Sheri Everts

Vice President of Student Affairs Steve Adams

Vice President of Finance and Planning Steve Bragg

Committee Reports:

Academic Affairs Committee Chairperson: Senator Stewart

Administrative Affairs and Budget Committee Chairperson: Senator Kalter

Faculty Affairs Committee Chairperson: Senator Borg

Planning and Finance Committee Chairperson: Senator Fazel

Rules Committee Chairperson: Senator Solberg

Communications

Adjournment

Motion XXXX-6: By Senator Ruscitti, seconded by Senator Krug, to approve the Academic Senate Agenda of September 10, 2008.

Senator Borg: This agenda is a bit thin. At the risk of setting the precedent that we seemed to set last year, I wonder if it would be better to cancel the Senate meeting, but to have the Internal Committees meet, unless there are important reports coming to us from the administrators that would need airing right now. I know that the committees will not have anything done yet or even, necessarily, anything to report. The danger, of course, is having committees not meeting when the Senate does not meet.

President Bowman: There is no budget news or capital news.

Senator Borg: Also, the State of the University Address will be given next week. I think we just need to make sure that the committees do meet.

Motion XXXX-7: Senator Borg, seconded by Senator Stewart, offered a substitution motion to cancel the Senate meeting and to advise the Internal Committees to meet as usual. Senators Ruscitti and Krug agreed to the substitute motion and it was unanimously approved by the Executive Committee.

Discussion:

Senate Presentations

Senator Fazel: Could we schedule as many of the presentations as possible at the beginning of the semester rather than at the end of the academic year? For example, could Jonathan speak at the next Senate meeting about academic advisement?

Senator Holland: We can certainly ask him.

Senator Stewart: Since I am on the Academic Affairs Committee, I can invite him.

Senator Holland: Are there other types of presentations that we would like to have?

Senator Kalter: Sometime before the Board meeting, I would like to invite Dick Runner and Barb Blake to talk about the budget. I actually just noticed on our agenda that the Provost's Office reports to the Administrative Affairs and Budget Committee on the budget. So that could happen in September.

Senator Holland: On the new budget?

Senator Kalter: Yes, and on the capital budget. I am not sure when that goes to the Board, but I know it is somewhere on that agenda.

Senator Holland: Are there other topics?

Senator Stewart: In the *Vidette*, there was an article about the Reggie Redbird bike rental project. In that article, it stated that if you ride your bike to school, you chain it up and it is not on a bike rack, they will cut the chain and take your bike, even if it's your own personal property. That concerns me. If it's their rental, that's one thing. If it's your bike and you don't chain it to a bike rack, that may just mean that there are no available spaces on the rack. So before you start taking people's private property, there should be advance warning and signage.

Senator Kalter: We had major issues, when we were in Williams Hall last year, with people chaining bikes to the disabled ramp. That could be a part of it.

Senator Borg: People chain them to the light fixtures in front of the Center for the Performing Arts, which is an utterly inappropriate place to chain them.

President Bowman: We actually have always done that. I think that they are just reminding people as more people ride bicycles on campus.

Senator Borg: A positive spin on this would be a request for more bike racks.

President Bowman: We would be happy to buy more bike racks; they are certainly cheaper than parking ramps.

Adjournment

Motion XXXX-8: By Senator Krug, seconded by Senator Stewart, to adjourn. The motion was unanimously approved.