STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
2005-2006 Annual Report

Submitted by
Joseph Grcic, Chairperson

I. Meetings: The committee had 8 meetings during the academic year

II. Attendance of Members:

> J. Grcic-attended 6 meetings-Chairperson
> J. Buffington-attended 7 meetings-Secretary
> E. Brown-attended 5 meetings
> A. Badar-attended 4 meetings
> Chia-An Chao-attended 7 meetings
> Lynn Duer-attended 7 meetings
> E. Hampton-attended 6 meetings
> K. Heath–attended 5 meetings
> R. Impink-attended 6 meetings
>
> C. Hoffman-attended 7 meetings-Faculty Senate Liaison

It was very difficult to find a time when all members could attend.

III. Response to Charges:

1) SAC should continue to be involved with the revision of Student Code section on Academic Integrity. Also, they need to be involved in the process of standardizing the reporting of plagiarism cases from department to College to Student Judicial and making sure all faculty are aware of the process.

Action taken: SAC determined that the most pressing component of the Academic Integrity charge centered on issues arising from the Notebook Initiative and the proper usage of notebooks. A subcommittee was formed to coordinate with the Notebook University Implementation Committee's (NUIC) Guidelines for Proper Use subcommittee. This subcommittee completed their investigation on the laptop initiative with regard to classroom usage. A report was completed and submitted to NUIC, the Faculty Senate and the Provost. Additionally, it was recommended that training materials be provided for faculty and staff prior to attending 2006 Sycamore Advantage

2) The following is a charge related to the Spring 2005 National Survey of Student Engagement survey: Look at the data of the ISU- NSSE of 2003 as well as the resulting recommendations that SAC made following this first administering of the NSSE at ISU, and comparing that data with the new data, make new recommendations.

Action taken: The primary recommendation is that the University form a task force to address these two main areas of concern. Many of the recommendations that follow need a high profile campus-wide commitment to achieve the intended results. It is recommended that the campus leaders (e.g., President, Provost, Faculty Senate, Department Chairs, etc.) join in emphasizing the need to improve the level of academic challenge, which would have a far-reaching impact on student perception measured in all areas of the NSSE assessment.

[See Appendix A]

3) Provide a member to fill the faculty-speaking seat on SGA .

Action taken: Jim Buffington was selected to serve as the faculty speaking seat on SGA.

4) Oversee the Faculty Scholarship.

Action taken:
(a) Promotion to Faculty

Several promotion ideas were discussed including providing faculty with a payroll deduction form at the beginning of the academic year and recognizing faculty for their contributions to the Scholarship by listing their names in a public channel such as the undergraduate catalog. E-mail promoting the tax benefits of contributing to Faculty Scholarship and the value to the students was sent to all faculty in January 2006.

(b) Promotion to Students

A list of students who met the Faculty Scholarship criteria was obtained from the Registrar Office. E-mail containing Faculty Scholarship information was sent to these students to encourage them to apply. In addition, a targeted MyISU portal announcement was issued to all undergraduate students to promote the Scholarship. As a result of these promotional activities, 41 students applied for the scholarship, as compared to 7 applicants last year and three winners were chosen.

5) Develop ways to integrate the Presidential Medal recipients into the awarding of the Faculty Scholarship.

Provost Maynard has suggested that the money associated with the Presidential Medal recipients should be donated to the Faculty Scholarship fund each year. It would be desirable to have some established process for identifying the student scholarship recipients. A process should be developed so that the faculty medal recipients could participate in the nomination and/or selection process in some way.

(Perhaps half of the money awarded via the Presidential Medal recipients would go to specific student scholarships and the other half would go to the Faculty Scholarship endowment, in order that the endowment would be more viable.)

Action taken: The Scholarship Subcommittee was charged with investigating the possibility of combining the Presidential Medal Award with the Faculty Scholarship Award. The Subcommittee recommends they be kept separate for the following reasons:

The Presidential Medal Award is given to a *graduating senior* at commencement. As many parents and prospective students attend commencement, the award is a good "advertisement" for Indiana State University. The award represents investments in student excellence and encourages future enrollment. On the other hand, the Faculty Scholarship is awarded to students in their *sophomore or junior* year (with 24-62 hours completed). This scholarship rewards high-achieving students and encourages them to complete their degree at ISU.

Although combing these two awards would result in an increase in available money for the Faculty Scholarship, we do not believe funds should be taken away from the Presidential Medal Award given the unique intent of each scholarship. SAC voted (6-0-0) to keep the two awards separate.

6) Investigate the process of selecting and monitoring student representatives to University standing committees.

Action taken: A subcommittee was formed to investigate means for improving student attendance at standing committee meetings. The subcommittee recommends that SAC continue to coordinate with the Faculty Senate and with SGA on the selection and the monitoring of student participation. Student attendance was closely monitored during the 2005-2006 academic year by both SGA and SAC. Attendance rates rose from 26 percent in 2004-2005 to 61 percent in 2005-2006.

National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) Profiles

Recommendations from Student Affairs Sub-committee (SAC)

CHARGE: Look at the data of the ISU-NSSE of 2003 as well as the resulting recommendations that SAC made following this first administration of the NSSE at ISU, and comparing that data with the new data, make new recommendations.

The following recommendations are being submitted to the full Student Affairs Committee from the Sub-committee members. The recommendations are being made based on the information available, and represent the interpretations of the members and have been made without full knowledge of recommendations made, or ongoing efforts to resolve these issues by other University personnel.

After reviewing the NSSE information from the OSPIRE website, two of the five NSSE benchmarks have surfaced as having a lowered moderate effect size for ISU freshmen and seniors as compared to the NSSE 2005 Top 50%. ISU is also lower in these two areas when compared to peer institutions, doctoral-intensive institutions, and the 2005 national NSSE norms. ISU is also lower as compared to our own figures from NSSE 2003, for Lack of Academic Challenge for freshmen, and for Supportive Campus Environment for freshmen and seniors. The other benchmarks generally have a small effect size. Therefore, it is this sub-committee's suggestion that we concentrate our efforts on the two benchmarks that have a moderate effect size; Level of Academic Challenge and Supportive Campus Environment. Recruitment and retention, top campus priorities, have components encompassed in both of these areas. Items in the other three NSSE benchmarks would also be impacted by the sub-committees recommendations.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The primary recommendation is that the University form a task force to address these two main areas of concern. Many of the recommendations that follow need a high profile campus-wide commitment to achieve the intended results. It is recommended that the campus leaders (e.g., President, Provost, Faculty Senate, Department Chairs, etc.) join in emphasizing the need to improve the level of academic challenge, which would have a far-reaching impact on student perception measured in all areas of the NSSE assessment.

Academic Challenge:
1.   Develop a Culture of Study throughout the campus community.
2.   Use University 101 as a vehicle to develop a culture of study and possibly require all entering students (freshman and transfer students) take it. The course content needs to be more robust with higher expectations for analysis and synthesis. Address time to be spent preparing for class (studying, reading, writing, rehearsing, etc.).
3.   As the academic profile of students entering ISU improves with higher admission standards, curriculum and syllabi need to be updated to ensure that opportunities for analysis and synthesis are woven throughout. A rigorous curriculum is a mark of excellence.
4.   Instructors need to give challenging homework assignments, some of which are to be done in groups, and require that the assignments be done in order to get students in the habit of studying. There should be a % of overall points (grade) dedicated towards homework assignments. Assignments should require more time to complete and the time spent should involve a level of analysis of course material that goes beyond mere application. Challenging homework can be integrated with experiential learning

projects. Increase the number of written papers or reports required of students and their lengths, in classes not already addressing these.

5.   Emphasize during Sycamore Advantage, Knowing Sycamores, and University 101 the difference between college and high school expectations. Continually communicate the expectation that to be successful in college requires more and better study skills, time management, planning, etc. Expect more from the students. Provide them opportunities to rise to the challenge.

6.   Emphasize the need to spend more time studying in formalized residence hall, or similarly arranged, study sessions/groups. Emphasize this also during the First Year Initiative in the residence halls. Form learning/studying communities for students both on and off of campus for all four years.

7.   Teaching Assistants and Adjunct Faculty are more prevalent in courses for first-year students. Have a coordinator within departments/programs that assure there is a common syllabus for each section of a course with continuity of challenging activities and assignments that require the students to function at the analysis and synthesis level. This should start at the 100 level courses and carry through the 400 level courses.

8.   Faculty should know what they will be teaching at least one year in advance, and departmental scheduling should be done two years in advance and finalized one year in advance to allow faculty the opportunity to invest more time in preparing more academically challenging curriculum.

9.   Faculty development should focus on helping instructors at all levels learn the how to for developing activities, assignments, and exams that extend the students learning, or at the very least require the student to apply theory from textbooks and lectures. Require faculty to attend/participate in at least one development session per semester on implementing more challenging coursework. Offer appropriate incentives/consequences.

10.   Improve communication routes to disseminate the above information to those that are able to make the needed changes. Use the Provost Newsletters, OSPIRE website (to review more data on NSSE), and Groupwise to disseminate the idea of the day for faculty to challenge their students (like those pop-ups about how to use Groupwise features). Use web based training modules for faculty so they could do the training on their own time and computer. Instead of expecting a faculty member to actively pursue information, bombard them with a campus-wide initiative that gives short blurbs of information over a longer period of time using a wide variety of delivery vehicles.

11.   Conduct an internal survey to find which college or academic units lag behind in offering academically challenging coursework. Also, ask colleges or academic units to survey how long their students study to prepare for exams on average.

Supportive Campus Environment:

1.   Many of the items listed above will help to develop a more supportive campus environment.

2.   Expand and emphasize, through a variety of vehicles, a culture of study within the campus dorms. Organize more formalized study groups, rooms, and other activities that show ISU supports a study culture, and is supportive in helping our students achieve success. Set aside time during these sessions to educate students on how to study." Possibly use successful students to organize and run these sessions, and/or mentors (e.g., students that have taken the same courses and done well in them).

3.   Expand the variety of activities that take place on campus for students (academic as well as social) to foster a community feeling within the students. Expand campus academic and social activities for off-campus students to foster this same community feeling.

4.   Using many of the vehicles cited in the previous section, institute an initiative to improve relationships between students and student-centered offices throughout the campus. In-service personnel on people skills, and make acceptable performance a criteria for continued employment. Review all systems, policies and procedures to make them more "user (student) friendly and streamlined.

5.   Conduct an internal survey of the students to know which support office is of more concern; financial aid, residential life, advising, admission, registration, etc. and what problems the students face.