

INDIANA STATE UNIVERSITY
FACULTY SENATE
2007-2008

April 17, 2008 Minutes

Time: 3:15 p.m.
Place: HMSU, Dede III
Officers: Chair V. Sheets, Vice Chair A. Halpern, Secretary Sr. A Anderson
Parliamentarian T. Sawyer
Senators: T. Allen, S. Brake, E. Brown, J. Buffington, E. Bermudez, H. Chait,
D. Collins, J. Fine, S. Ghosh, E. Hampton, P. Hightower, N. McEntire, M.
McLean, M. Miller,
G. Minty, S. Phillips, S. Pontius, G. Stuart, K. Wilkinson, J. Wilson, D.
Worley, D. Yaw

Absent: S. Allen, K. Bolinger, M. Brennan, B. Corcoran, N. Corey, H. Davis,
K. Evans, J. Hughes, P. Jones, T. Steiger, C. Stemmans, G. Zhang

Ex-Officio:

Guests: M. Boyer, T. Foster, E. Kinley, L. Maule, Q. Tukes

I. Administrative Report (Bob English)

Announcements:

- a. President Benjamin's goodbye reception today.
- b. Faculty Recognition Banquet evening of April 16, 2008 (Distinguished Awards)
- c. Search finalist for Director of National Affairs and Financial Aid.
- d. Graduation ceremony is May 3, 2008 at 2:00 p.m.
- e. Bob English stated that Jack Maynard wants to express his appreciation to the Faculty Senate for all the hard work it has done throughout the year in shared governance

II. Chair Report

Welcome everyone to the last meeting of the 2007-2008 Faculty Senate. I am pleased you are here to help us wrap up the "faculty's business" for the year, and I want to thank you for all your hard.

I've got several things to report.

1. The Retirement Health Benefits committee has had several meetings, and I believe will continue to work through the summer. I have been informed that they will be establishing

a web-site, and I would encourage everyone to keep informed of their discussions. This is something that we all have interest in.

2. I just returned from a conference in Chicago relating to the accreditation process. It's clear that we have a lot of work to do before our visit, particularly regarding assessment. We, the faculty, as part of our responsibility for curriculum, need to take ownership of this information-gathering and improvement process.
3. At the Board meeting this morning, John Beacon gave an enrollment update. Applications for admission continue to be way up, and new admits are currently up about 12% from last year, and transfer enrollments appear up as well. Acceptances of critical scholarships (e.g., laptop, and presidential scholarships) also seem to be up. These are great signs, and we all hope they continue.
4. As we know, the Presidential Search is on-going. In my Board report this morning, I thanked the Board for its continuing commitment to bring a strong pool of finalists to campus as part of the selection process. Unfortunately, given the lateness of the season, it is possible that they could bring people to campus in early June. Although not ideal for faculty or students, it would seem that Summer I is a more active period on campus than would be Summer II.
5. As you know, the cancellation of the Life Sciences and EOB departments was on the Board's agenda today. Trustee Alley invited me to speak to it. I have been asked to share my comments with you.

First, I noted to the Board that the matter [of EOB and Life Sci] came outside of the normal governance process, and that such a violation of protocol rightly raised faculty concern. I also mentioned the A & S resolutions on the matter, and that members of Senate asked the EC to step in to review the action.

Then I presented the subcommittee report as given at the EC meeting on April 8:

On Tuesday, April 1st, the Senate Executive Committee approved the creation of a select subcommittee of Executive Committee members to meet with the Dean of Arts & Sciences to inquire about his decision to cancel the Departments of Ecology & Organismal Biology and Life Sciences and form a Provisional Department of Biology.

On April 4th, 2008, the subcommittee met with Dean Sauer and Provost Maynard. During that meeting, the Dean made available to the subcommittee lengthy confidential documentation, going back several years. That documentation, and their discussion, led the committee to conclude, unanimously, that "Dean Sauer's actions of March 4 were not in haste, but that he considered every possible solution before determining this course of action. Because the situation goes far beyond just curricular issues, and impacts not only faculty but, more importantly, students, as well as the entire university, the committee determined that faculty primary authority was not circumvented.

The [sub]committee further notes that they were saddened that such an action by the Dean even needed to take place, but that they understand his reasons, the necessity for action at this time, and in this manner.”

They [the subcommittee] continued:

“The provisional department provides a structure to allow time and effort to reattempt negotiations toward a united program or programs in biology. The Committee urges the Provisional Department Chair to work quickly to establish a timeline and benchmarks and to make this process as transparent as possible to all those directly involved and to regularly apprise the Senate Executive Committee of the progress being made.”

III. Graduate Students Association (Quinette Tukes)

- a. Sponsoring a barbeque picnic on April 29 from 11:30 to 1:30.
Special Purpose and Part Time Temporary Faculty Representative
- b. S. Hoffman reported on Special Purpose programs (report attached.)

IV. Memorials

M. Boyer read the memorial for Merle M. Ohlsen (see attached.)

V. Approval of the Minutes (V. Sheets)

The Senate minutes of February 22 and March 20 were approved with corrections. SP/PM 26-0-0.

VI. Fifteen Minute Open Discussion

- a. Ed Kinley on the search for the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies – he encouraged the Senate to attend sessions for candidates. Feedback is encouraged.
- b. R. Lotspeich read a statement (copy attached to the minutes.)

Statement: This morning the Board of Trustees approved the recommendation of Dean Sauer and Provost Maynard to dissolve the two current biology departments and merge all the associated faculty members into a single provisional Department of Biology. There was very little discussion on the matter and no debate whatsoever. The Board was informed that this recommendation had not been reviewed by the usual University governance units, but this did not seem to bother the Board much. Such a review will happen in the future.

The Board's support of this unusual procedure seems to have been due in large part to the representation made by Virgil Sheets of the Faculty perspective on the matter. Dr. Sheets reported that the Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate had reviewed the recommendation and approved both the recommendation and the manner in which it was made. i.e. outside standard governance procedures. He also reported that their determination was based on confidential information presented by Dean Sauer to a subcommittee of the Senate Executive Committee during executive session of this subcommittee. Thus the support of the Executive Committee for the recommendation of Dean Sauer and Provost Maynard is based on secret information that cannot be examined in debate about whether their recommendation is justified by actual circumstances.

This brief special report by Dr. Sheets allowed Michael Alley to conclude that the Board could proceed to approve the recommendation with confidence that appropriate shared governance procedure had been followed. It is clear, however, that appropriate procedure has not been followed, since you, the Senate, have not discussed the matter beyond asking whether

the Executive Committee will be making a report in your meeting today. Now you have the report, but it is largely pointless since any debate you might have on the recommendation has been mooted by the Board's action taken this morning.

Nonetheless, I urge you to discuss the matter vigorously and to hold your leadership to account for their uncritical support of this administration's actions. My view is that the current Senate leadership, by their uncritical acceptance of both recent recommendations (to merge the biology groups and to stop the formation of Environmental and Ecological Sciences), has not served the interests of either the faculty they represent nor the functions of the University. In the Faculty Council of the College of Arts and Sciences we had a rather different reaction, but to no avail since we must rely on the Senate to represent us to the Board.

To my mind this episode reveals clearly that shared governance at Indiana State University is largely a fiction. I think it is unhealthy to proceed through life, especially an academic life, operating under delusions and misperceptions. Either shared governance should be made real through vigorous engagement of the faculty and adherence to procedure, or the pretense that it operates should be abandoned. No need to rush to a decision on this, but I think it ought to be an item of intense discussion among the faculty, in the Senate and in all the other faculty governance bodies of the University. Moreover, the erosion of genuine shared governance is largely a lapse on the part of faculty members. There is a collective problem of apathy and an unwillingness to challenge the judgment and decisions of administrators at ISU. An unwillingness to engage in the effort required results in capitulation to administrators' wishes. The ISU faculty suffers from a lack of professionalism in many ways (and I apply this criticism to myself). I recommend an essay by Neil Hamilton as a source of appropriate perspective. ("Faculty Autonomy and Obligation: What goes into the social contract between higher education and the society it serves?" *Academe*, Jan-Feb 2007, pp. 37-42.)

Problems and Results beyond the Biology Issue

Problem: The destructiveness of impetuous administrators. The kinds of directions they have set recently have imposed significant costs on faculty in the form of lost opportunities for research and teaching because we have so much engaged in administrative work under their direction. As I noted in my editorial essay of 13 April, maybe \$150,000 of effort was wasted because Dean Sauer said the faculty should create Environmental and Ecological Sciences and then said: No, never mind. We don't want that after all. The ISU administration has proposed several actions in recent years without providing adequate justification or analysis.

- Why should there be no departments in the CAS with fewer than 10 faculty members?
- Why should there be a combination of the two colleges, nursing and HHP?
- How is biology at ISU "in extremis?"

- Why is recombining biology groups a better solution to their conflicts than proceeding with Environmental and Ecological Sciences and a separate Department of Life Sciences?

If one reads the argumentation supporting their decisions critically, one finds lapses of logic and misinformation. It amounts to a PR effort and uncritical optimism rather than substantive justification.

Problem: ISU administrators instinctively move toward secrecy and innuendo. Evidence supporting decisions is presented in executive session. The economists and chemists have falsely been claimed to oppose to a new program/department in Environmental and Ecological Sciences. What is so scary about open debate in which proposals are defended on substantive grounds? As Vyacheslav Molotov noted in relation to Eastern Europe, "The problem with open democratic elections is that you may not win."

Results: Has ISU been evolving in positive directions under ISU administrators, despite their avoidance of due process? Are the good results worth sacrificing due process?

- They have been successful in terminating a viable program and department of sociology.
- Their actions ended humanities and Masters programs in economics some years ago.
- They are getting closer each semester to terminating philosophy.

- They were able to terminate an independent Department of Physics.

Why are these changes considered progress? Just when ISU needs to evolve from a role of providing inexpensive access to higher education to a place of higher quality four-year degree programs to complement the role assumed by IVY Tech in Indiana, ISU has been degrading these capabilities. Why is this? Bad management is what I would say. Rather than systematically evolving to a new approach based on higher quality and intensive study in particular disciplines, we adopt gimmicks like a laptop initiative and experiential learning, while eliminating physics, philosophy and sociology.

And do we have a healthy, vibrant work morale among the faculty? There are some with this outlook, but an honest evaluation would reveal widespread disappointment, mistrust and cynicism.

In closing, I think it is extremely important for the Senate and the entire faculty to engage these issues in debate.

VII. New Business

a. Program Proposals

i. Civic Leadership Minor

The proposal presented by L. Maul and was accepted (DW/MM), 25-0-1.

ii. Elementary Education: Literacy, EC, P&I program revision was presented by J. Kuhlma on behalf of D. Quatroche. It was accepted (HC/PH). 26-0-0.

iii. EDS in School Psychology program revisions

D. Krug presented the revisions, which were accepted. (EH/PH) 26-0-0.

iv. Guidance and Psychological Services program revisions.

D. Krug presented the revisions, which were accepted, (EH/PH) 26-0-0.

The quorum was lost at 5:10.

A special meeting of the Senate will be on May 1 at 3:15 in Dede III to complete the agenda.

v. Nursing Post-Master's Certificate

vi. Psychology & Sociology MOU

b. Committee Recommendations

i. Alternate to Presidential Search Committee – David Worley

ii. Plus/Minus Grade Recommendation from Exe (FAC report, SAC recommendation, GC comments)

iii. FEBC disability & gastric by-pass recommendations

iv. Calendar, Exe Action pending

VIII. Old Business

a. Arts & Sciences request for reconsideration for student voting issue.

IX. Committee Reports

a. AAC

b. AEC

d. FAC

e. FEBC

- f. GC
- g. SAC
- h. URC