

Fall 12-9-2009

Senate Meeting, December 9, 2009

Academic Senate
Illinois State University

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Academic Senate Minutes
Wednesday, December 9, 2009
(Approved)

Call to Order

Senate Chairperson Dan Holland called the meeting to order.

Roll Call

Senate Secretary called the roll and declared a quorum.

Minutes of November 18, 2009 Will Be Approved at the Next Meeting

IBHE-FAC Report (Professor Lane Crothers, IBHE-FAC Representative)

Professor Lane Crothers: We have met twice since last I was here, once in River Forrest, Illinois at Dominican and then last Friday in Springfield with the Executive Director of the IBHE. Everyone would like to keep the coalition that got MAP funding going. Nobody has the slightest idea how, but it was a great thing and we should keep doing it.

We did have an opportunity at Dominican to talk to one of the state legislators who had sponsored the creation of what is now called the Public Agenda. It is the fourth strategic plan for higher education in the last 16 years. Basically, the theory at the time was that there would be this grand bargain worked out for higher education, that everybody would get X amount of money for Y amount of programs for now and for all time. Of course, it very rapidly turned into whatever it is today, which is a kind of unfunded set of ideals that we ought to achieve.

In budget news, everybody is blaming everybody and nobody has an answer. There seems to be no political will to do anything about it and if there were any political will, it is not at all clear that the money would come to us. Perhaps the easiest way I can suggest the kind of contemporary difficulties on this body and the inability to keep the former MAP coalition going lies in a proposal that came out of a subcommittee on which I serve as the vice-chair, which, with all kinds of wiggle language, we would work out a grand bargain like they have worked out in Missouri and Ohio recently, which is that for stable funding of appropriate size for a long enough term, we would stop with the giant tuition increases. It might be a terrible idea. I am sure Vice President Layzell could tell me why I am wrong. The U of I and the UIC were very much opposed to it at the last meeting. The best I could figure out is that they believe they ought to be able to charge more for tuition than they currently do.

It seems to me that that is the kind of no brainer that public education in higher ed ought to go for and yet the leading institutions in the State of Illinois aggressively opposed it, eventually causing a ten to ten to one tie vote. The one abstention came from the a community college that had gotten a deal with Harley Davidson that Harley Davidson would pay the tuition of their students who get at least a B average in college prep in their district, McHenry County College up in the Chicago area. So, as a consequence, they are not really worried about the money at all.

The IBHE apparently is going to try to work on teacher certification standards. They can't control curricula, but they can influence the standards by which teachers are certified. One particular proposal is to require that elementary education majors have a content specialty. When asked why by an education faculty, the answer was, 'the data proves it works.' This particular answer came from the Director of the IBHE. Other kinds of

things we are dealing with with the IBHE are if you want to offer classes in Illinois, you can do it without anyone certifying you whatsoever so long as you do not have a physical presence in the state. So long as you do not have a physical body in the state, you can offer anything you want online. A lot of people do that and then slip in buildings and faculty. Alternatively, there has been a rise of for-profit institutions that essentially take MAP money and other kinds of money from students, but then actually have no accreditation standards and no actual ability to deliver on the services. The IBHE is technically supposed to regulate those people, but just has no one to do it. So the state is having a pretty significant loss of state-funded support in that.

Senator Kalter: I am curious about this tuition deal. I know that I am putting them on the spot, but at some point I would not mind hearing what our administrators think about this trade off between the state guaranteeing that they are going to do this and us guaranteeing that we won't raise tuition if they do.

President Bowman: There is no legislation that would do that and there is no conversation in the legislature to move forward with that kind of program. We would certainly entertain it. We would want to look at the numbers and see what impact it would have on our bottom line. I think the core problem right now is that the state has a structural deficit and they simply don't have enough money to even entertain making that kind of a deal. If they embarked on that sort of conversation right now given our tax structure, I would be very pessimistic that it would work. To be honest, flexibility on tuition is extremely important if universities are going to, one, maintain quality, and, two, preserve some kind of access. Take this year as an example where we raised tuition 7.6%. It generated \$2.9 million in new revenue and the state in the summer asked us to pick up veterans and National Guard grants. That cost us \$3 million, so the tuition increase was a wash. We were \$100,000 in the hole when we started and had we not this year had the revenue of students continuing through the pipeline, we would have a real problem, especially if this year didn't include the \$4.6 million in stimulus funds, which will go away next year.

Professor Crothers: Let me very clear that I fully respect where that is coming from. I was political in my support for this. Given that that they are not going to do it, this was a way for us to say we tried to hold tuition down. The state chose to pump tuition onto the backs of students. That's the state's decision, not ours. I was saying we are exploring every aspect we can to get the tuition burden off the backs of students and the state isn't supporting us, so that was my motive.

Senator Borg: I have always been very interested in your reaction to the mechanics and the interaction of the FAC with various bodies. Do you see any improvement in communication and effectiveness in the future or is this something, given the pessimism that you sometimes express, that is it worth continuing?

Professor Crothers: Any meeting that has faculty representatives/leaders from a number of different universities in one room, those sorts of meetings turn into 'let's prove we are smart'. I think the IBHE has fallen into relative chaos and that's the problem. Part of it is the leadership of the IBHE. Part of it is the former governor's treatment of the IBHE. Part of it is the way that the budget and other kinds of cycles have been changed in politics. I think that there are internal problems on FAC that are leadership problems and that there is not a coherent sense of what we should be doing. So, as a consequence, we have a very friendly environment that spins.

Senator Borg: Is the IBHE a viable body anymore?

Professor Crothers: That is an interesting question given that the Chair of the IBHE is now also the Chair of SURS under state law. The IBHE has never been a coordinating body. It has never been a power body in the state. It is true that in the last ten years or so, it has become marginalized. It strikes me that new governors,

new leadership can change that, but there doesn't seem to be any short-term will. The question in all such circumstances is whether or not you need to keep your voice in the game. There are a few of us who have been on this committee for a long time and it's important, even though it's frustrating. So far, at least, I have decided to keep going.

Chairperson's Remarks – No Report

Student Body President's Remarks – No Report

Administrators' Remarks

· President Al Bowman

President Bowman: You may have heard media reports yesterday that Moody's lowered the state's bond rating to the second lowest in the country. California is lower than us. The impact on Illinois State and other public universities will be that we will be reviewed by Moody's sometime within the next 90 days. So, right now, public universities in Illinois are on Moody's watch list for a possible downgrade. Our most recent review with them, and nothing really has changed except for the state's financial picture, indicated that our strong student demand, our cautious spending policies, our manageable long-term debt were all very positive and that picture certainly hasn't changed. Moody's is deeply concerned about the state's structural deficit and its political inability to address that issue. The state still has a bond rating that is, I don't want to say strong, but that is above junk status.

The state's backlog of bills does continue to grow. We are standing in that very long line. The state released a payment of about \$5.2 million to us a couple of weeks ago. If you include that payment against our new November payroll, or the payroll just completed, the outstanding balance is \$46.5 million. The budget actions that we have been using to deal with the state shortfall are working. Dan Layzell and Phil Adams have been in contact with Comptroller Hines regarding our cash flow needs now and in the spring and we are certainly making payroll and moving forward. You have probably heard media reports from Carbondale in particular. They apparently are so short on cash that they will have trouble making their December payroll without some sort of infusion. I have no worries that that will occur.

There continue to be some bright spots in our budget including private giving, which is off to a very strong start, and probably is on pace to break a record this year. We will likely surpass where we were during the height of the campaign. Applications for next fall are running about where they were this time a year ago, so student demand, at least based on application data, is pretty good. Grant awards to faculty are also off to a very strong start. The state situation is what it is; there will be a political solution at some point for it, but I think that given those challenges, the university is in pretty good shape. We will have tuition payments that will be coming in in January and we will continue to move forward. At some point, the state has to pay us. We can't cover an \$85 million state shortfall for an entire year. If the state continues to lengthen its payment cycle, at some point in the spring, we will have to do short-term borrowing to get us through. I think, long-term, the bigger challenge for us will be FY11 with the stimulus dollars going away and the potential situation where the legislature decides not to address taxes until after the November general election.

Senator McGinty: Can students who should be receiving the MAP grant expect to get those payments dispersed to them when they get their other financial aid dispersed this spring?

President Bowman: My guess is that it will come in in fits and starts as the last payment did.

Vice President Layzell: That would be my sense of where things are right now.

Senator McGinty: Would the financial aid office know more details about that?

President Bowman: They won't because it is all based on the state's payment cycle. It is encouraging that the state actually made MAP payments before it paid university operating payments. So if you are student, I think that's a positive signal. My guess is because the whole MAP program was so visible politically, you will see MAP payments before the state clears up the backlog of operating payments to public universities. We will not turn students away in the spring because they haven't received their MAP money. So essentially, we will cover that until those payments come in.

Senator Borg: I have been hearing on the news about the state asking agencies to plan for a 14% decrease. Is that going to affect the university systems at all?

President Bowman: No, the governor specifically ruled out public universities, so it does not affect us and with the state accepting stimulus dollars this year, I don't believe that with the strings attached to those federal dollars that they could do that. Next year is another matter.

Senator Borg: I have discerned a distinct lack of information about the possibility of a mid-year pay raise. What is the status of that at this point?

President Bowman: It is still where it was. The only thing that has really changed is timing. When we started this year, we had no inclination that our reimbursement from the state would be this delayed. Until they get close to catching up, we can't contemplate distributing a midyear raise, but the plan is still in place to do that. None of us is worried that the state is going to renege on what it owes us, but it may be a long cycle and we may be well into the next fiscal year before this backlog is finally cleaned up. We didn't get the last payment from the state for FY09 until September.

Senator Fazel: When the state is late in making the payments and we borrow money, does the state reimburse us for the interest charges?

President Bowman: We end up losing twice because if they were making timely payments, we would earn some interest on locally held dollars. We are now using those locally held dollars to pay our daily operating expenses and then with borrowing, we will incur interest costs.

Senator Van der Laan: I am actually asking a question for a colleague who wondered since there weren't raises last fall, will, I think you answered this question before, the mid-year hoped for raises not be retroactive, but will they take into account the evaluations of faculty last year. Will that mid-year raise include what the merit and what the evaluation would have been?

President Bowman: Absolutely. The retroactive piece, because of tight finances, we would go back to January rather than back to July 1. If the magnitude of the raise is large enough, then we would use the regular merit categories. If it's smaller, then we will come back to the Senate and get your indulgence on doing something just across the board. Hopefully, it won't get to that point, but if we are in a situation where we could distribute 1.5%, it probably doesn't make much sense to run it through the ASPT system with all of the different categories. My preference would be just to make it across the board. If we are pretty sure that we are not going to get cut in the spring, there is nothing to prevent us from doing raises early in the spring. The reason that we are reluctant to do that is that it aggravates our cash flow problems because we are floating

payroll on behalf of the state, so if we give raises, it makes that that much tighter.

· **Provost Sheri Everts – Absent**

· **Vice President of Student Affairs Steve Adams**

Vice President Adams: I want to remind you of winter commencement. We will have two ceremonies on Saturday. They will both be at Redbird Arena. We will be graduating 1,400 plus students at that time. All of the residence halls will close with the exception of south campus. Atkin-Colby and Hamilton-Whitten will remain open for students living in those buildings, but all of the other halls will close for break Saturday at 2:00 p.m. Along with that, the dining centers will close; Linkins and south side, Thursday evening, and then Watterson will remain open until after lunch on Friday.

It is always sad to report when we lose one of our own. We did just that last week when a student, a first-semester freshman from Canton, a student in the College of Business, passed away at OSF St. Francis Hospital in Peoria. His name is Sean Kunz, age 18. We are certainly very saddened over Sean's death. As is the case, a lot of his friends and members of our Dean of Students staff and residence hall staff attended either the visitation last night or the funeral today. Our condolences go out to Sean's family.

We have the final numbers on students visiting the student health services for flu-like symptoms. That number was 673. Fortunately, we had very few students with serious cases, if any. There were no known hospitalizations, but this fall we did see an increase of 65% in visits to the student health service. That number this fall was about 19,000 individual visits to the health center compared to about 16,000 last fall, so it has not been a good semester for weather or illnesses.

Senator Marquis: I had a question about Student Health Services. Do they feel a strain from a budget or personnel standpoint with that much of an increase?

Vice President Adams: They have to reallocate the resources of the staff as well as some of the testing that goes on, so we certainly do feel that. When you start to see a trend, you do all you can to try to offset that and have your staff in place more on certain days of the week, increase your clinic hours, and that sort of thing, to handle those students that come in. There was a lot of very good planning that took place for the onslaught of the flu-like symptoms.

Senator McMahon: I saw in the *Pantagraph* that there was a fire on the 10th floor of Hamilton-Whitten. How bad was the damage and did it affect students during finals? Will they be relocated next semester?

Vice President Adams: It did affect two students in that room. It was confined to the room. It was started by a candle and it was mostly smoke damage as opposed to any fire damage at all. The room did display some damage, so we had to displace both students and they should be back into that room at the beginning of the second semester.

Senator Kalter: I noticed in the *Pantagraph* a week or two ago that near the IWU campus there had been a holdup at gunpoint. I am wondering if you got any communication about that or if that is a local Bloomington issue.

Vice President Adams: I am not familiar with that incident. That means that it did not go on our activity summary, so there was nothing that was reported to the ISU Police Department, which leads me to believe

that it was handled by the Bloomington Police Department or the Sheriff's Office.

Senator Fazel: What is the situation with the vaccine for the H1N1? Have we received anymore? Do we have any shortages?

Vice President Adams: Right now, we do not have a shortage. To the contrary, we had some doses left from the clinic that we had, along with the appointments that we set up at student health. It was somewhat surprising that more students did not come forth to be vaccinated. I think the sense of urgency after the middle of October began to go down. We will be giving back that vaccine because of issues with storing it and giving it back to the county so the county can more appropriately store that. We have somewhere in the neighborhood of 60 or 70 doses we had ready to administer and that will be lost, but the rest of it we will be able salvage and give back to McLean County. In the future, if there is a problem in the second semester, we will be planning appropriately to acquire more vaccine.

Senator Fazel: Is there is any reason why the vaccine cannot be used for staff and faculty if we have extra that we are returning?

Vice President Adams: We had given priority to the students and I think it is appropriate to continue to give priority to the students in the second semester.

Senator Fazel: I understand that, but if there are extra that we are returning to the county and there are 60 or 70 that we are going to lose because we don't have immediate use for them...

Vice President Adams: The ones that we are returning to the county are because the semester is over and we are not able to probably store them.

Senator Fazel: So they will be returned back to us in the second semester?

Vice President Adams: They can be returned back to us in the second semester, but we will continue to assess the situation.

· ***Vice President of Finance and Planning Daniel Layzell***

Vice President Layzell: The Campus Master Plan planning process continues. We have now posted summaries of the feedback from each of the public forums and the online survey to date on our website. We would invite you to look at it. We are in the process now of meeting with each of the colleges and other stakeholder groups. We will be meeting with SGA later in January to have that discussion. We are still on track to have an initial draft of the plan by the April-May timeframe. Several of you may have already gotten this, but Planning and Institutional Research just put out the University Facts pamphlet. Finally, from a facilities standpoint, work on the fourth floor restrooms in Stevenson will begin over break. We also, on a positive note, were successful in working with the Capital Development Board to get them to agree to fund blinds in the facility.

Senator Kalter: I have a couple of requests related to the fourth floor bathrooms. We were talking about the number of people who still might be on the floor during break who are doing grading, productivity reports and planning spring courses. We were wondering if we could have it set up so...apparently there is going to be a lot of noise on the floor between about next Monday and just before the beginning of classes. While we were getting windows replaced, we were able to move out of our offices into alternative offices—just having

the computer moved. If that's possible for those who might want it, it would be very helpful. We also noticed that Milner has earplugs and we wouldn't mind getting some of those, too. The other thing that I wanted to ask about has to do with whether there is a contingency plan for the classes around that area in case that really drastic noise does get pushed into the spring semester. One of the people I represent said when we work with the contractors and the contractors work with us and are hearing each others concerns almost day to day, things work out pretty well. So if we can know if the schedule is going to change, that would give us some time to make sure that the first days of classes are not interrupted.

Vice President Layzell: I would certainly be happy to work with anybody who wants to move offices because of the noise. Secondly, we don't anticipate that the very noisy work will extend into the start of the second semester, but certainly if it looks like its going to, we will develop a contingency plan and communicate that well in advance of the start of the semester.

Committee Reports:

Academic Affairs Committee – No Report

Administrative Affairs and Budget Committee

Senator Kalter: We had a very nice conversation finalizing our draft recommendations for the AIF this year.

Faculty Affairs Committee:

Senator Liechty: We discussed the policy for the Honorary Doctorate and we have made some very slight changes. We will bring that as an Information/Action Item for the next meeting.

Planning and Finance Committee:

Senator Fazel: I would like to thank President Bowman and all of the vice presidents. We have received the reports from all of the vice presidents in response to our priorities report for 2009-10. We had a very interesting informative discussion tonight. The reports were really impressive.

Rules Committee – No Report

Action Item:

11.02.09.01 Residency Status Policy (Distributed in 11/18/09 Packets) (Academic Affairs Committee)

Motion XXXXI-51: By Senator Stewart to approve the Residency Status Policy. The policy was unanimously approved without debate.

Adjournment

Motion XXXXI-52: By Senator Hoelscher, seconded by Senator Monahan, to adjourn. The motion was unanimously approved.