Academic Senate Executive Committee
Meeting minutes
October 2, 2015


President Scott Opasik called the meeting to order at 12:01 p.m.

Chancellor Allison reported that the Chancellor’s Medal was awarded to the Vera Z. Dwyer Charitable Trust at a ceremony on Thursday. The event also served as the kickoff for the Bicentennial fundraising campaign. The University-wide kickoff of the campaign was last Saturday at the state fairgrounds. The overall goal is $2.5 Billion for the IU System. IU South Bend will need to raise $35 million over the next five years. Pledges can count toward the total as long as they fit within the five year window. Gifts from individuals, corporations, and foundations plus non-governmental grants (Kresge Foundation grant, the Templeton Foundation grant won by Kevin Ladd in Psychology) can count toward the IU South Bend total. Typically in this kind of campaign you raise half of the money before going public with the campaign.

President McRobbie’s office will provide matching funds to the regional campuses in the areas of scholarships, endowed chairs and professorships that are $50,000 or more. For retired staff or emeriti donations, that threshold is $25,000.

In the College of Health Sciences this means that we will have over $300K in scholarships. The endowed Advanced Nursing Practice professorship will also be matched once all of the money is in.

Jerry Hinnefeld asked where the money was coming from. Previous experience with endowed positions matching coming from the University tax. Discussion. Allison believes the money is coming from the President’s office.

Many donations received recently will be included in the matching program.

Honors and Athletics scholarship fundraising is in the works.

Chancellor Allison noted that Spirit week is next week on campus, there will be lots of activities.

Chancellor Allison discussed data that is available for students seeking to compare colleges. Much of it is very negative about IU South Bend.

One such example is College Factual which is published by USA Today. Allison’s office is working to correct some numbers on that site.

Chancellor Allison shared a chart showing graduation rate comparisons for first-time enrollees and transfer students. This information comes from Student Achievement Measures – a voluntary national database developed by some University systems because other rating systems did not look at transfer students. They use National Clearinghouse data to track students that eventually graduate at another institution in the U.S.
One problem with our data is our method of counting; we include those students that have not paid their bursar bill for an entire semester. Other institutions drop those students. This might make a different in the percentage points.

These statistics will be haunting us for quite some time even as we improve.

The Freshman Experience is something that we Chancellor Allison believes we can control - Jann and Terry are working on a position paper to ask the faculty to consider some practices that will improve the experience.

We do better at graduating transfer students in a timely manner.

Do these issues have something to do with Indiana in general? One thought is that we have a relatively new Community College system compared to many states.

Arkansas Pine Bluff and CSU Dominguez Hills were very similar to us and both have significant minority populations.

Cathy Borshuk asked about comparisons with other Northern manufacturing states - cultural and economic variables may need to be taken into account in these comparisons. Chancellor Allison is working with the Regional campus Chancellors to ask IU to help to complete research on issues such as this.

Chancellor Allison believes that looking at FYS and General Education can lead to ensuring that students have some stronger, signature FY experiences. For example, ideally every student would have service learning, a sustainability related course, international experience – some combination of signature projects that we can offer to engage students. It would be helpful to have a coherent plan/program to represent us. These are just examples, but we need a stronger package to market based on core experiences.

NSSE data has shown that service learning has the highest impact on retention to the second year.

Cathy Borshuk asked about our FY experience – do we have assessment data on retention. Allison noted that there was some data; he will ask Linda Chen to report on that.

Lee Kahan noted that the Student Success Collaborative has been helpful. He also noted that in his experience it has been difficult to use the available data to get a handle on student success in the English department; there are many transfer students. Also, SIS had inaccurate numbers – students listed that were no longer enrolled, for example. Allison suggested that he work with the Registrar to explore the difficulties with the numbers.

The Chancellor noted that Jonathan Bush, ACE Fellow, has shared a questionnaire used at Western Michigan University to ascertain what students are most at risk for failure to retain. This is administered at Orientation. Students are then notified that they are identified as at risk and receive offers of assistance. WMU has protocols for each of the risk factors in terms of intervention. They intervene by requiring students to participate in particular experiences that can help them be retained. Checking in with the students to see how they are doing is most important.

High School GPA is the strongest predictor of college success. The Mother’s level of education is a strong predictor also.
Chancellor Allison noted that they are going to look at students that have not paid the full amount for the fall by Oct. 10th; these students will be asked to come in to Financial Aid to see how we can help. This has been done recently with the 21st Century Scholars and O’Bannon Scholars; staff worked to make sure that those students returned and completed required number of hours by using some available funds. Part of the upcoming fundraising campaign will include raising funds for retention scholarships to keep students in school.

The Chancellor left the meeting.

Scott Opasik began the meeting by discussing the agenda. Lee Kahan asked to include the review of online courses. PTR and Teaching committee were also added.

The Athletics Committee will be on the agenda at the Senate meeting. Because of Title IX we are adding softball and need to hire coaches. Should this be an Action item for the agenda? Discussion. The Athletics Committee can take action and report their recommendation to the Senate. If there is no objection from the Senate floor it is accepted.

Cathy Borshuk noted that she has heard some negative comments about the last Senate meeting in terms of the time it took to discuss and pass the course evaluation questions. Others noted they had heard positive comments. Scott noted that he will comment on this at the October Senate meeting.

Academic Senate Handbook revision was discussed. Bill Feighery will Chair a committee to review the PTR Guidelines; Peter Bushnell, Cyndi Sofhauser and Jerry Hinnefeld will also serve. Erika Zynda will be the rep from Academic Affairs in order to post material to the web, she is ex officio.

The remainder of the Handbook will be distributed by sections to relevant committees to review. Lee Kahan will shepherd the process. The charge will ask for revisions as soon as possible but no later than February of 2016. The Executive Committee will then review. As each committee works there may be issues that must come before the Senate. These can be addressed as they arise. Sections can be forwarded to Academic Affairs for posting as they are completed. If it is necessary to negotiate with Academic Affairs on a particular issue we will then have Scott Opasik and Lee Kahan attend those meetings with relevant committee members.

We will complete these necessary revisions in the current form of the Handbook. Later revision of the website to follow the format of separate policies (as is current practice with IU) can be addressed later. It was noted that the revisions should make appropriate references to larger IU policies as appropriate.

Question about how to keep handbook/policies current? Lee will review how IU policies are updated/kept current.

Thinking forward to whether or not the Senate will have to approve overall Handbook changes – Jerry Hinnefeld thinks NOT unless there are policy changes. This is not part of the Constitution.

Scott Opasik asked who would maintain the Course Evaluation Common Questions. Discussion. It was decided that we will not make a plan to maintain and only revise if a problem is raised. Jerry Hinnefeld suggested that President Opasik keep a listing of Senate Actions for the year and forward that to the Board of Trustees.
Lee Kahan noted that additional data-gathering questions are being administered; survey fatigue is a problem. He suggested that we raise this issue with Academic Affairs. Scott believes that John McIntosh thought that these shouldn’t be used either since they made it too long. He will check on this issue.

Committee Charge Review

We had previously discussed asking each Academic Senate Committee to review their charge and membership. Discussion. Based on the importance of the handbook revision tasks, we will table this task for now.

Scott asked for input on a PT&R issue related to the role of the committee in split decisions. EVCAA Joseph has asked him whether the PT&R committee could write a letter justifying their position in order to explain NO votes if they are split significantly. Discussion. Some members recalled a similar discussion at a PT&R summit which included an argument that there should also be an explanation from the YES votes. It was noted that some other campuses do provide a letter from PT&R and not just a vote. There are also cases with split decisions at different levels of review. It makes sense that the PT&R committee would have seen enough from the earlier levels of review to be the place where more documentation could occur. There is information in the PT&R section of the Handbook referring to Administrators meeting with the PT&R Committee in person for clarification. Scott will report this to Jann.

Teaching Committee

The Teaching Committee sent a proposed revision to the TTA guidelines. There was a question about the committee structure wording. Scott Opasik will ask Deb Marr about the Committee’s intent. The Teaching Committee will be asked to give a report at the October Senate meeting.

Lee Kahan requested that the Academic Senate consider moving to electronic ballots. All members were in agreement. Scott will investigate free web-based options, UITS solutions, and the possibility of a class project with Hossein Hakimzedeh.

Draft agenda for October’s Senate meeting.

Academic Senate
Date: October 16, 2015
Room, time: DW1001, 10:00 am

1. Call to order
2. Approval of minutes:  
   18 September 2015
3. Committee Reports  
   A. Athletics Committee  
   B. Teaching Committee  
   C. Handbook Revision – Lee Kahan
4. Other Reports  
   A. President’s Report  
   B. AAUP – Jake Mattox
5. Administrative and Officer Reports  
   A. Chancellor Allison
The meeting was adjourned at 2:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy W. Colborn
Secretary