**Officer Musings**

**August 24, 2011**

**Executive Committee Summary**

President Bradley met with Governor Daniels, Commissioner Lubbers, State Superintendent Bennett and the seven Indiana public university Presidents. The state is obligated by the Federal Department of Education to rank and rate its Colleges of Education. It is choosing to use a model first employed by the state of Louisiana in which teacher and student performance are compared to the results of experienced teachers. This will not be implemented for a few years. On the subject of accountability, each of the Presidents complained that the money designated for performance-based funding in Indiana is simply mirroring enrollment growth four years in arrears. Specifically by giving performance awards based on total degrees awarded, they are mostly rewarding what your enrollment was for the class of students about to graduate. Because ISU’s enrollment was low at that time (four years ago), ISU was not rewarded. Excluding the research grants (to which only IU and PU can appeal) this accounted for 80% of the all the performance funding. When asked if he was against the legislature imposing tuition caps, the Governor responded that he was but would not step in to prevent the commission or legislature from imposing them. R. Minas, D. Bradley and D. McKee will meet with state legislative committee on the 8th to justify tuition rates at ISU.

Steve Lamb noted that he is disturbed by the report of the Taskforce on Barriers to Graduation (described elsewhere as the Shriver Report) presented to the Board of Trustees during its June meeting. In that report, recommendations were offered that were not vetted by the faculty through the governance process. Though they may be viewed as preliminary, some, such as those regarding scheduling and chairpersons’ authority, are being implemented. One, regarding overall graduation hours, is clearly in the primary authority of the faculty and was not discussed by any faculty body. He is of the opinion that the Board of Trustees is reasonably sensitive to following the proper protocol of seeking governance input and is disturbed by administration’s failure to seek governance input before presenting this report to the Board. He inquired about Emeriti appointments and was told that these are on the August Board agenda.

C. MacDonald expressed concern that new faculty had not received their computer. She expressed consternation about the choice of IT to upgrade Blackboard during August rather than May. S.Powers indicated that this was an ITAC recommendation and that ITAC includes faculty who recommended August rather than May. Finally she asked about whether Eluminate enabled rooms with more seats had been made available. She noted that those that exist do not have that many seats for hybrid courses.

T. Hawkins expressed concern that the bookstore’s web page is offering potentially confusing information to students on materials. Specifically, he said that those materials that are required and recommended are sitting next to advertising (some of which is potentially misleading) for material the bookstore is merely trying to sell.

T.Hawkins began a discussion on the scheduling mandate coming out of Academic Affairs that stimulated much input from others. It was noted by D. Bradley that we should have Jack with us when we discuss this issue. He, nevertheless defended the report’s conclusion that there should be common start and stop times. This sparked discussion about the administration establishing a set of rules without consulting chairpersons, without recognizing that chairpersons perform a balance act of different issues, and without having evidence linking the scheduling issue to graduation difficulties. J. Conant offered specific examples of how he schedules to deal with the need to incorporate experiential learning while simultaneously meeting SCH goals. S. Lamb noted that the Provost appeared to recognize these problems when the officers discussed this with him last week, but the initial failure to seek input from chairs was extremely problematic.

R. Guell asked S. Powers about the change in the readmission policy. He noted that a student with multiple dismissals was placed in a department without the consent of that department and that admission policy and retention policy are the primary authority of the faculty, the Student Affairs Committee in particular. The policy as it existed required students to return to their original college. The new policy appears to allow students to change colleges even when they are not in good academic standing. S. Powers responded that there is a difference among the associate deans as to the definition of the phrase “college of the intended major.” Does the “intention” mean the current intention or the previous intention? R. Guell asserted his contention that this was always a bad policy that had been dealt with between associate deans and his view that this policy should be changed but that should be by the Student Affairs Committee.

The Standing Committee Charges were approved. These will be on the Senate web site soon. D. Bradley indicated that the administration did not support the creation of a budget committee of faculty. S. Lamb noted that the Administrative Affairs Committee of the Faculty Senate already has advisory authority with regard to budgets. This transfers that responsibility to the FEBC. There should be no diminishment of our advisory authority.

**Asides**

The officers are also beginning to formulate our own agenda for the coming year and trying to merge that with what we know about the Administration’s agenda will be.

1. First, we understand last year’s faculty evaluation vote included a “trial run” for this fall. What this means is that we will go through the process outlined in the document passed by the Board last year but that there will be no raises tied to it. It will serve two purposes: it will allow departments and colleges to develop, test, and alter their internal processes for the real thing that will occur in the Fall of 2013, and it will allow colleagues to forewarn each other about shortcomings they might want to address in this two-year window. We will help ensure that the resulting process identified by the administration and the Faculty Senate will be followed. For those who remember the document, there is a September 1 deadline for faculty to submit their 3 pages of materials. This will clearly have to be pushed back this time but, at this time, we do not have information for you on when the Provost’s office will create the template for the 3 page report nor do we have information on when the new deadlines will be. We do know they are working on it.
2. Second, the officers are worried about some recent developments with regard to Chairpersons, their role, their selection, and the degree to which the administration is respecting their judgments. Productive conversations with the administration have begun in this realm and progress is being made.
3. We will press the administration to advance to the Board last year’s Senate-passed tools that will assist Chairpersons (in consultation with personnel committees) in dealing with faculty who are not fulfilling their handbook-described obligations. The administration was very close to accepting our advisory input, but were troubled with one phrase.
4. We are also troubled by a report that Associate Vice President Shriver delivered to the Board in June (on the subject of “Barriers to Graduation”) and the resulting dictates that severely (and in our view in contravention of the Handbook) substitute the Registrar’s judgment for Chairpersons’ judgment with regard to scheduling. There are also curricular recommendations in it that went to the Board without any review by the faculty. While respecting the role of the Board to make judgments about the curriculum, we are troubled by the thought that the administration would send to the Board recommendations on curriculum that have never been considered by the faculty. As Lamb stated at this meeting of the Executive Committee, The Shriver report must go through the Faculty Governance process. The report impinges on primary authority of the faculty. It is fair to state that the report to the Board is being viewed/explained as preliminary to input from the governance structure; regardless, by-passing the governance structure has resulted in discomfort.
5. We are considering the selection process for both acting and regular chairpersons in light of anomalies that occurred this spring and summer. This will be a conversation that will take place within the Faculty Affairs Committee of the Faculty Senate, within the Executive Committee, and with the cooperation of the administration.
6. We understand that the associate deans have agreed among themselves to allow students to be readmitted to the college of their choice. There are good reasons for this to be the policy. Students who failed out of a particular program ought not have to re-enter that program, achieve good academic standing, and then pursue their new program. However, admission and retention policies are the purview of the Student Affairs Committee of the Faculty Senate and departments (not just colleges) should have some say about the inclusion of these (at-least-once dismissed) students into their programs.
7. The administration is seeking a significant change to our Health Insurance cost-sharing relationship and we are prepared to listen and offer input. We understand that this system has become a significant drain on University resources and it is in all of our interests to find an acceptable solution that preserves this needed benefit.

Finally, it was with great appreciation that the officers were invited by Board Chairperson Alley to have a conversation about the Board’s decision to renew President Bradley’s contract. We felt great relief that the salary and benefit figures discussed were quite reasonable. Though the particulars are not for us to disclose, we can tell you this: President Bradley’s starting salary (from 2008) was well-below that of all but one of the Presidents in Indiana’s public university system and he has not and will not (under this new contract) earn in salary anything more than the salary adjustments he recommends for us all. There is one new retirement benefit in his package but the dollar value of that is, in the judgment of the officers, reasonable. In particular, comparing this contract with the last, should he chose to join his home department at the expiration of his contract, he is put on a salary path that would have him earning the market salary in that department within 5 years.  The total package, all in, will make place him in the bottom 10% of peer university Presidents in terms of compensation. While that is still a lot of money, we are extraordinarily grateful to  Chairperson Alley for consulting with us and to both Chairperson Alley and President Bradley for producing a contract that is sensitive to our history and our economic environment.