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Faculty Senate

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**FACULTY SENATE MINUTES FOR December 3, 2002 (Vol. XXXI, No. 15)**

The 2000-2001 Faculty Senate minutes and other information are available on the Web at <http://www.eiu.edu/~FacSen> The Faculty Senate agenda is posted weekly on the Web, at Coleman Hall 3556 and on the third-level bulletin board in Booth Library. Note: These Minutes are not a complete verbatim transcript of all utterances made at the Senate meeting.

**I. Call to order by Anne Zahlan at 2:03 p.m.** (Conference Room, Booth Library)

Present: R. Benedict, D. Brandt, G. Canivez, D. Carpenter, D. Carwell, J. Dilworth, F. Fraker, B. Lawrence, M. Monippallil, J. Pommier, S. Scher, M. Toosi, J. Wolski, A. Zahlan. Guests: R. Deedrick, A. Sartore, B. Lord, C. Prendergast.

**II. Approval of the Minutes of November 19, 2002.**

Motion (Dilworth/Wolski) to approve Minutes of November 19, 2002. Yes: Benedict, Brandt, Carpenter, Carwell, Dilworth, Fraker, Lawrence, Monippallil, Pommier, Scher, Toosi, Wolski, Zahlan. **Passed.**

**III. Announcements:** None

**IV. Communications:**

- A. E-mail message (21 November) from Fern Kory re: EWP Rubric
- B. E-mail message (26 November) from Bob Augustine re: Faculty Senate Invitation
- C. E-mail message (2 December) from Kipp Kruse re: Computer Legal Issues/Academic Freedom
- D. E-mail message ( 2 December) from Newton Key re: EWP
- E. COEPS Curriculum Committee Minutes

G. Other communications: Re: The subject of the EWP and the evaluative rubric employed, Chair Zahlan suggested that the Faculty Senate should continue looking at, discussing and polling constituents about the EWP and attendant issues. Dilworth: This could be a forum issue in the spring. Scher [re: the evaluative rubric]: It raises academic-freedom issues—if [a faculty member doesn't] want to grade a paper that way [according to the rubric], or if the assignment you give is not oriented toward being evaluated by that rubric. ...The notion that a paper written for a Research Methods in Psychology class could be compared to a paper written for English 1002 is really kind of ridiculous.... Benedict: Out of the 350-plus writing-intensive classes that are taught on campus, the fact that less than five [faculty members] have actually responded to our request [for input]...tells me that it's not as big a problem as it may appear to be. I recall the discussions where the writing-across-the-curriculum committee has always been chaired by an English-faculty member, and the CASL committee—they compromised with this [the EWP]. This is not perfect. There is no such thing, especially when assessment is concerned, that is going to please every single faculty across this campus. It was discussed at length, if not ad nauseum, at the CAA, continuing with the CASL. Every person who teaches the writing-across-the-curriculum, the intensive classes, are given e-mails, are given the rubric, are given the opportunity to respond to that; we've been doing it for three years. My concern is how we undo it; and anybody, who has worked with assessment on this campus for the past fifteen years, has to understand the frustration and the very difficult task of continuing to change this. We don't have anything to deal with, to find out whether it needs to be modified or changed. ...Are the students improving from their freshman to their senior year? That was the goal. ...If minimally competent is what we're shooting for, then this is problematic. You have to have some sort of gradation from one to something, to show that we're improving over a course of four years, that students are in fact doing something different [from] that which is just minimally competent....

Zahlan: The reason we haven't had more responses is that it's still incipient, in other than English classes. Scher: I think you're absolutely right, Anne. ...This year is the first time I am [as an advisor] getting students who—either because they have already started the process in their first- or second-year courses or because they've entered and don't have the option of doing the Writing Competency Exam—are going to start [composing their EWP's]. ...Maybe the thing to do is put it off until next year, and discuss it [the EWP] at the beginning of next year

when more people will have had that experience. I don't know... Lawrence [to Benedict] : Is it true that when this [the EWP] was discussed, however many years ago, that the rubric wasn't part of this, that it was just a yes or no [that a student's writing was at least minimally competent]? Benedict: I believe that was [so] initially, right; and then WAC ...and CASL—we [on CASL] couldn't come to an agreement on this. It was very difficult, as I recall; it was a very arduous process [through] which we came to a common meeting ground. So, I guess that's what I—to try and redo this, given the efforts that were [involved], I just don't see where we go from there; I just don't see - Lawrence: But it doesn't seem to be such a big change to remove the rubric, if that's something that was tacked on at the end. It sounded to me as if there hadn't been much faculty input into adding the rubric. Zahlan: Yes, the rubric appeared this year.

Lord: The rubric has an up-and-down background to it. ..When the Electronic Writing Portfolio came forward and CAA started considering the whole thing, you're right—there wasn't initially the rubric. Then there was a lot of discussion: "Wait a minute; we need to have some sort of rubric. Otherwise, there's no hope for some sort of common criterion being applied to students' work." The four-part rubric was generated at that time, and it included sort of sample material. CAA, knowing that was part of the package, approved the package—not specifically the rubric... Then before it was actually implemented and anyone actually had to sign anything, they said, "We're not going to use this rubric for now; we're going to turn it over and have an up/down." The rubric that appeared this year was one that was part of that sample package that CAA saw two years ago when they implemented the whole portfolio-part of the process. So it sort of appeared, wasn't used and reappeared...

[Chair Zahlan suggested that the Senate continue the EWP discussion at some later time.]

## **V. Old Business:**

### **A. Committee Reports:**

1. Executive Committee: Zahlan and Carpenter met with Interim President Hencken and Provost Lord today, 12/3/02. Topics discussed were: IBHE's budget recommendations (still not released); the budgetary process in Springfield; campus budgetary strategies re: IBHE; the rumored possibility of the IBHE's abolishment by the new governor; the rumored possibility that universities may not be allowed to retain their own income funds in the future; and the interim president's intention to present the Honors College proposal to the BOT in January.
2. Nominations Committee: No report.
3. Elections Committee: Brandt indicated that the elections need to be completed by the end of March, and he asked Senators to set aside time in their schedules to serve the Elections Committee.
4. Student-Faculty Relations Committee: No report.
5. Faculty-Staff Relations Committee: No report.
6. Other Reports: Zahlan has appointed Brandt, Canivez and Carpenter to an ad-hoc committee for the purpose of reviewing the Senate's bylaws.

### **B. Student Senate Proposal on Grade-Appeal Procedures**

Student Senator Deedrick handed out copies of Student Senate Resolution 02-03-07. Deedrick: This passed [in the Student Senate] by a vote of 22 to 0 to 0, so the Student Senate was heavily in favor of this. ..I would like to see this body [Faculty Senate] take some sort of action on this.

Motion (Benedict/Wolski) that the Faculty Senate support Student Senate Resolution 02-03-07.

Carwell: Does the [appealing] student have any say over who the student is going to be who is going to be voting on the [given grade-appeal committee]? Deedrick: No. Carwell: Do we have any problem with privacy concerns, or anything about having a student having access to another student's grades..? Scher: I wonder..about issues of how any student has an opportunity to appeal or object to the members of the [given grade-appeal] committee... Monippallil: My concern is the issue here regards the changing of a grade. I believe that the people who are most competent in making that decision would be faculty members in [a given] department, and the department chair. I am concerned that the [student] vice president of academic affairs..would not be in a position to make a judgement as to the type of grade a student should receive in a particular course. This will be the first instance of peer grading at this institution, if we allow this. I am concerned about the ramifications of that, allowing a student who is outside the process to make a qualitative judgement regarding the grade that is provided by a faculty member. I do not think that the need for that really exists because the faculty members of [a given] department,

including the chair, are best placed to make a judgement of this. Your [Deedrick's] references to a jury [of peers], in my opinion, appear misplaced; this is not a juried process... So I have grave reservations about the process of [granting a student] a vote in this matter...

Scher: There are potentially two parts to what a grade appeal might entail. One is the stuff that Matthew is referring to, in terms of [the evaluation of given work and disputes about that evaluation]. The other is the process in which the assignment was given and evaluated, and so on. While I agree with Matthew that the students are not qualified to evaluate the quality of the work, the student will always be in the minority on [a given grade-appeal] committee; but what the student does add is a perspective on the process of assignment and grading, and quite often that is the bigger issue. ..I support this [resolution]... Fraker: ..Is there a university-level grade-appeal committee [beyond the department level]? Deedrick: There is no university standard for what a department's grade-appeal committee makeup is. ..To get back to Dr. Monippallil's point, I believe you do have to have a student on there [a given grade-appeal committee] just as a neutral party... Fraker: So there really is only one [given] grade-appeal committee [at the department level]? If it's not settled at the department level, there's not another committee? Deedrick: Then it goes straight to the provost... Benedict: I'm clearly in support of the student-senate resolution. I do believe that it validates the process that we find very important as an institution. I do not see the student vote as being an evaluation of the professor's grading of the students... An objective assessment [of how a grade in question was arrived at] is something students should have an opportunity to do.

Carwell: ..The only difference [if the student-senate resolution is made university policy] is that a student would have a vote in the final determination [of a given grade appeal]? Deedrick: The difference is we would add a student. ..As it stands right now, when they contact me I'm there [at a given grade-appeal-committee meeting] as an ex-officio member... If I have a student in there, as a voting member, then that adds more assurance to [an appealing student]... Carpenter: I see a potential conflict of interest here [in the student-senate resolution]... If the student vice president of academic affairs selects the student to serve on [a given] department grade-appeal committee, that selected or appointed student will have a vote. Correct? Deedrick: Correct. Carpenter: Yet, the student vice president of academic affairs..goes there [to a given grade-appeal-committee meeting] in an advisory capacity to the student appealing the grade. Correct? Deedrick: I'm there in an advisory role in the process. It's not specified in the IGP what my advisory role is. Carpenter: It says here [in the resolution] that [the student vice president of academic affairs] serves "bn these committees as an advisory counsel to the student appealing grades." So there's a real conflict of interest when the student vice president of academic affairs, who is going as an advisory counsel for the appealing student, has already selected the student who is going to be on the grade-appeal committee with a vote. Deedrick: To counter that, that's why it's done in consultation with department chairs. So, obviously I would have to have a meeting with the [given] department chair, submitting the name of the student who is going to be serving on this committee. If the department chair at any point feels that the student is not satisfactory..., that department chair is there as a check and balance to that conflict of interest that you perceive. Carpenter: I suggest the Faculty Senate place this issue on the ballot in the spring and let the entire faculty vote on it.

Dilworth: ..The student's appealing a grade already got a vote; they had the opportunity to appeal. I'm hired by the taxpayers to give grades. I have a chair; I have a dean; I have a provost; I have student workers; I have students in class who might have been in a previous grade appeal, but now they have me in class. ..What is going on at Eastern? Why don't you just let the students teach the classes, give the grades, get their papers and go on? I do support David's [Carpenter's] idea of getting input from the faculty. Carwell: I'm going to echo what David said. I talked with people in my department after Ronnie [Deedrick] brought this up last time, and they were split almost right down the middle, saying exactly what Matthew [Monippallil] said, and saying exactly what Steve [Scher] said; and I honestly don't know how to vote to represent them on this. Fraker: I'm not sure we need a [faculty-wide] vote. On any other issue, we'd put it in the Minutes and request comments. I think that would suffice to get faculty feedback... Deedrick: The ultimate body that is going to make a decision on this is CAA. That's where this rests. I'm simply going around to the different constituencies at the university, either asking for their support, asking them to discuss it; but ultimately it's up to CAA to make a recommendation on it, and then it goes to the provost. That's just how things work at this university.

Scher: I agree with French that I don't see why this should be handled in a way different from a way we handle every issue that comes to the body. We are elected as a representative body... We're not talking about having students grade papers, or having students give grades; we're talking about including a student as part of a process that affects students, where a student perspective is relevant and important... We're asking students to make judgements about fairness... I would ask Reed and Jean [Benedict and Wolski] if they would consider withdrawing their motion and replacing it with the following motion: That the Faculty Senate recommends to the Provost that a student—ppointed by the Student Vice President of Academic Affairs or the Chairperson of the

Graduate Student Advisory Committee, in consultation with the department chair—be included as a voting member on departmental grade-appeals committees. Monippallil: I thought this was about a grade appeal; it is not a fairness-appeal committee. The question before the [given grade-appeal] committee is: Is the grade given the appropriate grade? ..If that is the question it's an academic question; and I am submitting to you that a peer is not in a position to make a judgement regarding the academic merit of a particular student. ..Giving a vote to a student does not make the process any fairer... Deedrick: ..This resolution is about fairness and balance; that's all this resolution is about. Monippallil: That assumes the present process is neither fair nor balanced, and that is a supposition I cannot support because there is no basis for it. Fraker:..I think a student can represent how [given] standards were interpreted. Pommier: ..Sometimes bringing a neutral party [into a given dispute] they will be less biased than we [the faculty] might be; but the idea is you have some neutral party in there. Carpenter: As I said earlier, this is not neutrality; this is implicitly a conflict of interest, the way it's laid out here.

[Benedict and Wolski withdrew their motion at this point, and Scher/Fraker made the previously stated motion. See reprinted motion below.]

Wolski: Coming from a department that teaches courses that are very seldom objectively graded but have subjective standards, there is often some confusion for students about why some grades are issued... Having somebody from the outside come in to take a look at the [evaluative] process..[may give] validation to what a student says.

[The Senate postponed further discussion of the issue and attendant motion until such time that it has received more input from the faculty.]

**VI. New Business:** None.

**VII. Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned at 3:53 p.m.

**Future Agenda Items:**

Evaluation of Electronic Writing Portfolios; Administrative Search Procedures; Computer-Privacy Policy; Shared Governance Concerns; Evaluation of Chairs; Temperature Control in Classrooms and Offices; Facilities-Naming Procedures; Textbook-Rental Service; Faculty Representation on Board of Trustees; Increased Workload and Overload; Distance Education; Timing of Commencement; Efficient Use of Available Resources; Planning for University Events.

**NOTICE: The Faculty Senate requests expressed opinions from faculty members about the Electronic Writing Portfolio and the evaluative rubric to be employed when evaluating students' writing.**

**NOTICE: The Faculty Senate requests input from faculty about the following motion: The Faculty Senate recommends to the Provost that a student—appointed by the Student Vice President of Academic Affairs or the Chairperson of the Graduate Student Advisory Committee, in consultation with the department chair—be included as a voting member on departmental grade-appeals committees.**

**NOTICE: The Faculty Senate invites all interested faculty to attend its 10 December 2002 meeting, during which a discussion with Dr. Bob Augustine about CUPB will take place.**

Respectfully submitted,  
David Carpenter