

1969

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Faculty Senate

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EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY  
FACULTY SENATE  
Minutes of October 20, 1969

MEMBERS PRESENT: Lahey, Read, Whitlow, Holley, Hieronymus, Tingley, Keiser, Gover, Hattabaugh, Crane, Palmer, Green, Spaniol.

MEMBERS ABSENT: McCabe

Correction to the minutes of October 13, 1969: In line one, Item A of Communications, following "Dean Kluge" insert "acting secretary of the Men's Athletic Board."

The minutes of October 13, 1969, were approved as corrected.

REPORTS:

- A. The Senate went into executive session and Miss Hieronymus reported on the meeting between the executive committee of the Senate and the Personnel Committee concerning the eleven-and-one-half month contract and evaluation.
- B. The minutes of the meeting of October 16, 1969 of the Council of Instructional Officers were circulated. Among other things the minutes reveal that "By consensus, the members stood by their original action to approve the practice of classroom visits as a means of evaluating and improving instructional effectiveness."
- C. Mr. Whitlow for the Nominations and Elections Committee distributed a "Draft Proposal for Article I of By-Laws for Faculty Senate Constitution." It was agreed to discuss the matter under Old Business.
- D. Miss Hieronymus circulated and elaborated upon her report of the meeting of the Board of Governors of October 16.

COMMUNICATIONS:

- A. From Mr. E. P. Colbert, a memorandum, which reads in part that "My general understanding too is that EPS (Experimental Program of Studies) has been accepted as a part of the University's overall educational commitment. The cancellation of Dr. Stephen Horak's scheduled lecture of October 15 in favor of the Moratorium seems accordingly not only a violation of his academic freedom but a partisan abuse of the educational communications effort of this University. Mr. Ernesto Arroba, after cancellation of Dr. Horak's lecture, failed to notify him personally of the cancellation and, attending the lecture which took place anyway, sought to usurp the floor for his own partisan goals. I wonder if the Faculty Senate finds any censurable actions in these events, such as perhaps a violation of Dr. Horak's academic freedom or reprehensible conduct by quasi faculty-administrative personnel (a quasi department head perhaps). In the future does the Faculty Senate plan to assume responsibility for censurable conduct by such quasi personnel as it may appoint?" A copy of a somewhat similar memorandum to the AAUP was included. It was remarked that the Senate never has had anything to do with EPS and that matters of academic freedom are the major concern of the AAUP. Miss Hieronymus agreed to seek clarification of several points in the memo, inform Mr. Colbert of what

she knows of the EPS, and refer him to the appropriate additional sources.

- B. From Mr. Edward S. Gibala, Executive Director of the State Universities Retirement System, a letter in answer to a Senate inquiry about disability coverage. Mr. Gibala writes that a faculty member on leave of absence without pay "is fully protected under the Retirement System" if he elects to pay into the system during the period. A faculty member is also protected "during the summer vacation periods when he is not on payroll." The only instance of concern about loss of protection is during periods of leave of absence without pay for which the faculty member neglected to elect to pay contributions to the Retirement System.
- C. From Mr. James Robertson, a memorandum recommending the establishment of a central ticket office for the University. It was moved (Tingley) and seconded (Crane) to endorse the idea of a central ticket office. The motion carried unanimously.
- D. From the Student Senate, its minutes of October 2, 1969. Received and distributed.
- F. From Mrs. Sue Sparks, a memorandum containing her resignation from the Faculty Senate. It was moved (Spaniol) and seconded (Tingley) that the resignation be accepted with regret. The motion carried unanimously.
- G. From Mr. Byron E. Munson, a memorandum which, in part, reads as follows:

At a meeting on October 14 the faculty of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology decided it should go on record as opposing the proposed class visitation for purpose of instructor evaluation.

The most important justifications of this position are as follows:

1. It would provide a rationalization for making crucial decisions about faculty based on subjective and isolated perceptions which are largely unrelated to overall academic performance.
2. It would facilitate ritualism and discourage experimentation, innovation, and creativity.
3. Many instructors would simply switch to their best lecture when the Department Head entered the classroom, thus creating a highly artificial situation.
4. The presence of the Department Head, or a senior member of the Department, in the classroom is likely to create the impression that the instructor is under scrutiny for some misdeed.
5. There is no face validity to the argument that tenured faculty are best qualified to judge their nontenured colleagues. It was observed that the extent to which tenured faculty relax their own performance standards after tenure is granted is unknown. Moreover, there has been no specification of the criteria for the evaluation of performance.

6. Probable classroom performance can be best assessed via a lecture presented when the candidate visits the campus. Furthermore any deficiencies of performance should be discovered prior to his being hired.
7. It will serve as an impediment to the recruitment of the most capable faculty.
8. The Student Senate's proposed instructor evaluation procedure represents a clearly superior method.

I want you to know that I am acutely aware of the need for an effective teacher evaluation technique. Personal experience with various types of student evaluation over a period of eighteen years has convinced me that, although there are certain inherent limitations, it is substantially more reliable than evaluations based on informal student feed-back and judgments by colleagues. Nonetheless, I am reluctant to rely entirely on student evaluation of faculty performance, particularly in the form proposed here at Eastern.

It is suggested that some of the more objectionable facets of classroom visitation might be eliminated through an experimental program developed in consultation with the faculty. In any event, I feel that whether or not this procedure is implemented should be based on its merits, vs. the merits of the other options available, rather than simply on the basis of prevailing norms and practices elsewhere. We can ill-afford to be rigid and unyielding if we are really serious in our quest for excellence and distinction. Possibly, an alternate teacher evaluation technique might be developed which is even more effective than the proposed classroom visitation procedure, as well as more acceptable to the faculty.

#### NEW BUSINESS:

There was no new business.

#### OLD BUSINESS:

- A. Miss Hieronymus announced that the following persons had agreed to serve on the committee to consider a constitution for the Faculty Senate: Messrs. Max Ferguson (chairman), Roger Whitlow, Carlos Taylor, Dale Downs, Harry Peterka, Robert White, Arlen Fowler, William McCabe, Pat Lenihan, and Miss Frieda Stute. It was suggested that the charge to the committee, under preparation at the present time, request it to prepare a plan of work, to make a list of basic questions of importance, and to seek advice from the faculty.
- B. The executive committee distributed copies of a motion embodying the Senate's position on the policy of visitation. In the discussion it was remarked that everyone is concerned with good teaching, but that few, if any faculty members, have been fired for bad teaching. "Evidence" of teaching ineffectiveness is sometimes collected after a decision to fire a person has been made for other reasons. It was remarked that as long as department heads are considered to be administrators who must carry out the desires of the administration without questioning it, meaningful evaluation will be difficult. It was felt that under the

present system, faculty actually participate very little in evaluation. It was moved (Tingley) and seconded (Crane and Palmer) to accept the motion and additions, to publish it in its entirety, and to forward copies to President Doudna, Vice President Moody, and the Personnel Committee. The motion carried by a vote of eleven for and one abstention. It reads as follows:

The Faculty Senate requests the Council of Instructional Officers to withdraw the directive concerning the obligatory visitation of non-tenured faculty members twice each year. This is not just because of the magnitude of the objection to the directive among the faculty, but because that objection is based on sound reasons. It has brought forth good thinking at the departmental level concerning the areas of evaluation and the improvement of instruction. The departments that have expressed themselves most freely against the visitation directive are clearly those same departments where there is neither fear of the department head nor insecurity on the part of individual faculty members. The Faculty Senate believes that faculty members themselves are most aware of the worth and ability of a colleague, and it objects to the fact that visitation was announced as a policy without prior consultation with the faculty through one of its representative bodies, preferably the Personnel Committee.

At the present time the Personnel Committee is developing new recommendations concerning the whole of the evaluation procedure. The Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate has conferred with them and we expect to meet again on the subject. The Personnel Committee wishes to develop these recommendations soon so that they can be incorporated in this year's proceedings. It is unfortunate that communication was such that your Council was unaware of this.

We support our request with the following ideas for your consideration:

1. Semi-annual visitation as a single means holds great possibility for error along with an onerous connotation. As an evaluational technique, it has questionable validity and reliability. Its value for improving instruction would depend on the skill of the department head, who often is an expert in only one subject area and perhaps not skilled in making constructive observations.
2. If the aim of visitation is improvement of instruction, then such improvement of instruction should be planned at the departmental level. It would not seem necessary to limit this to non-tenured faculty. It could include voluntary visitation, visitation by faculty needing help in other faculty members' classes or holding seminars concerning the teaching of courses having many sections.
3. If visitation is part of the evaluational procedure, then it would be important that it be incorporated in the total scheme of evaluation as one of a recommended number of ways of evaluation of faculty members by their peers. It would be the duty of the department head to report to the faculty member his progress. Since evaluation at the present time takes place at the departmental level, the department head acting with his senior staff colleagues, it would seem important to encourage the development of valid

means of evaluation by consensus at that level and also by the committee which acts for the faculty at large, the Personnel Committee.

4. The policy of visitation and its method of announcement reflect the administration's lack of knowledge of the professional attitude of the faculty and its ultimate concern with good teaching. The Senate submits that positive proposals for evaluation have been made by it (Minutes of July 9), by departments who have objected to visitation, and are to be made by the Personnel Committee. We believe the faculty has responded responsibly, and we restate our hope that "all personnel should begin their duties with the knowledge that the University and their colleagues assume they are professionals until they prove that they are not. "

C. It was moved (Spaniol) and seconded (Green) to accept the Draft Proposal for Article I of By-Laws for Faculty Senate Constitution with the removal of the words "under direction of the Chairman of the Senate" in lines two and three of paragraph one on page three. A motion to table was made by Spaniol and seconded by Tingley.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:55 p. m. The next scheduled meeting of the Faculty Senate is on Monday, October 27, from noon to 2 p. m. in the Heritage Room of the University Union.

#### AGENDA

1. Constitution
2. Evaluation (visitation)
3. Proposal for nominations and elections procedures
4. Eleven-and-one-half month contract (sabbatical)
5. Presentations to Board
- ~~6. Moratorium~~
7. Selection of President
8. Recognition of retiring faculty members
9. Campus disorders, local policy
10. Scholarships for children of deceased faculty members
11. Intercultural Council

John H. Keiser  
Secretary