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November 4, 2008

Faculty Senate

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Call to Faculty: Faculty interested in serving on the Alumni Services Commencement Committee should contact Senator Dawn Van Gunten at dvangunten@eiu.edu.

I. Call to order by Chair John Pommier at 2:00 p.m. (Booth Library Conference Room) Present: J. Best, A. Brownson, J. Coit, C. Dale, M. Fero, R. Hoberman, K. Padmaraju, J. Pommier, J. Russell, J. Stimac, D. Van Gunten, A. White, M. Worthington, C. Coon, and M. Martin. Absent: M.-L. Li and J. Wallace. Guests: B. Lord (Provost and VPAA), M. Hanner (Dean, COS), B. Irwin (Dean, Honors), J. Snyder (Associate Dean, LCBAS), C. Phillips (Director, Human Resources), J. Painter (Family and Consumer Science), M. Belden (Human Resources), L. Holloway (Human Resources), D. Mauer (Child Care), J. Phillips (Eastern Student Parent Association, E-SPA), G. Sterling (CAA Representative to Faculty Senate), P. Sanders (Student Senate), K. Kromphardt (Student Senate), M. Murphy (Student Senate), L. Reeves (E-SPA), S. Ware (E-SPA), J. Astrouski (Daily Eastern News reporter), and A. Rockery (Daily Eastern News photographer).

II. Approval of Minutes of 21 October. Approval of the Minutes of 21 October (Coit / Padmaraju) as corrected – Yes: Best, Brownson, Coit, Dale, Fero, Hoberman, Padmaraju, Pommier, Russell, Stimac, Van Gunten, White, and Worthington.

III. Announcements
   A. Student Representative Martin stated that last Thursday, 30 October, there was forum of local elected officials that visited campus. Senator Righter, Representative Rose, Sheriff Cox, Chairman Eads, State’s Attorney Ferguson, Coroner Nichols, Clerk Rennels, and retired Mayor Cougill attended the event. Martin hopes that the forum can be a monthly event in which faculty, staff, and students can become more familiar with local officials.

IV. Communications
   A. Memorandums of 21 October, from Provost Blair Lord, re: Emeriti Status
   B. Email of 27 October, from Michelle Murphy, re: Library Hours
   C. Email of 28 October, from Joe Astrouski, re: Cell Phones
   D. Email of 29 October, from Les Hyder, re: Foreign Language Requirement
   E. Email of 30 October, from Eric Hiltner, re: Campus Safety Walk
   F. Email of 30 October, from President William Perry, re: Parking
   G. Email of 31 October, from Cheryl Barker, re: Child Care
   H. Memorandum of 31 October, from Dean Hine, re: On campus Day Care Center
   I. Email of 3 November, from Shamika Ware, re: E-SPA
   J. Email of 3 November, from Jennifer Reed, re: Daycare Center Proposal

V. Old Business
   A. Committee Reports
      1. Executive Committee: no report.
      2. Nominations Committee: Senator Van Gunten (Coit) made the motion that Senator Fero be appointed to the Apportionment Board. By acclamation, Senator Fero was approved. Senator Van Gunten (Coit) made the motion that Tina Veale be approved as the College of Sciences representative to the Library Advisory Board. By acclamation, Veale was approved. Senator Van Gunten asked for a volunteer to serve on the Alumni Services Commencement Committee. Interested faculty should contact Senator Van Gunten (dvangunten@eiu.edu).
3. Elections Committee: no report.
4. Faculty – Student Relations Committee: Senator Fero said that her committee is working with the Faculty Forum Committee at requesting student involvement with the forum.
5. Faculty – Staff Relations Committee: Senator White met with Cay Kolling last Monday, 27 October, and stated that the shared concerns with Staff Senate included the EWP, Diversity on Campus, Daycare, and the Capital Campaign. They will continue to meet, but that staff supervisors do not encourage meeting during work hours.
6. Faculty Forum Committee: Bonnie Irwin, Dean of the Honors College and Provost Blair Lord gave a short presentation on the Forum. Provost Lord began by stating that he and the Dean’s Council had spent a great deal of time discussing integrative education and personnel development of students here at Eastern. Provost Lord indicated that the presentation that Dean Irwin was about to give on the Academic Affairs web site at: http://www.eiu.edu/~acaffair/IntegrativeLearning/ Dean Irwin gave the presentation (attached at the end of these minutes) with the question as to why we should be concerned with integrative learning. She replied that much of the learning takes places outside of the classic classroom and that learning is making connections from multiple sources and applying theory to practice. Part of what students should be doing is making intentional choices, e.g., taking a class at 10 AM, not because it is not at 8 AM, but because that particular class better suits who the students wants to be when they graduate. Dean Irwin added that we should be preparing students earlier and one way that we can do that is to break down the walls between disciplines and show them what and why we are doing things in certain ways. Chair Pommier thanked the Provost and Dean Irwin for their presentation and expressed the hope that many faculty could attend the Fall Faculty Forum on Tuesday, 11 November. Senator Padmaraju asked for moderators and recorders for the break out sessions and many of the senators volunteered.
7. Other Reports
   a. Provost’s Report: The Provost reminded Faculty Senate of the Faculty Development speaker on Thursday, 6 November.
   b. Budget Transparency Committee: no report.
   c. Awards Committee: Senator Coit reported that 3 nominees for the Luis Clay Mendez Distinguished Service Award had been received and that the committee will have the name of the award recipient by the next Faculty Senate meeting.
   d. Senator Pommier asked for volunteers to chair the ad hoc committee to review the Provost’s memorandum on the Emeritus Retirement Wall and the definition of emeritus status at Eastern. Senator Best will chair the committee with senators Brownson and Hoberman on the committee.

V. New Business
A. Chuck Phillips, Director of Human Resources, and Linda Holloway and Marla Belden (both from Human Resources). Phillips thanked the Faculty Senate for the invitation and asked what questions the Faculty Senate might have for Human Resources. He added that Human Resources can only explain all of the possible options available to faculty and staff and that they could not make recommendations. Holloway explained that the State University Retirement System (SURS) considers service at all state universities and that “lost” years of service from another institution may be purchased before retirement from Eastern, when applicable. Belden added that non-payable sick leave may be used to receive service credit up to a year. In response to a question from Senator Coit, no single formula is used to suggest the amount of life insurance a new faculty member should carry. Holloway suggested that as soon as new faculty arrive to Eastern they may try to make one-on-one appointments with Human Resources staff to discuss benefits and options. The PowerPoint® that is used during new faculty orientation will also be made available online for review, but Central Management Services ruled that all choices must be made during the first 10 days of employment.
B. David Mauer, Jocelyn Phillips, Leah Reeves, and Shamika Ware on Childcare at Eastern. Mauer thanked the Faculty Senate for addressing the issue of Child Care at Eastern again. He stated that in the 1980s he worked in Dean Moore’s office as the Coordinator of Faculty Development on the issue of childcare at Eastern and has since met with President Perry and the student and staff senate on the issue. The original proposal, which cannot be found, had suggested limited childcare (5 days/week only while school was in session) and that pertinent majors help with the childcare. The proposal was aimed towards for 3 – 4 year olds. The proposal was later dropped owing to budget considerations. Phillips stated that the Eastern Student Parent Association (ESPA) was established in 2004 based on the needs of new, continuing, and graduate students who needed help with childcare while being full-time students at Eastern who have a full
plate of obligations on top of being parents. She stated that ESPA is a support group to participants and has helped retain current students and helped others graduate. One example of the many things that the group has accomplished is the extension of the shuttle bus route to University Apartments. Her desire is to have full-time, quality, daycare at Eastern in order to help retain and graduate students. Reeves, a graduate student and vice-president of ESPA, presented the Faculty Senate with a proposal for bring daycare to Eastern Illinois University (attached at the end of these minutes). She stated that she will focus on the benefits from a childcare center for EIU faculty, staff, and students – namely retention and recruitment of new students and faculty, it would be in keeping with other universities, and the decreased costs to faculty and students. ESPA’s proposal is to offer childcare to all faculty, staff, and students who need it between 7:45 AM and 9:45 PM. The center would be funded in part through student fees. Ware indicated that current childcare options for students typically fill up before many arrive on campus and are too expensive for students, e.g., she pays $156/month for childcare and had to take an emergency loan in order to pay for the childcare or miss class. Chair Pommier added that the spring 2005 report on childcare (attached at the end of these minutes) indicated that there was desire on campus, with 145 respondents, to have some type of daycare. Senator Pommier said he spoke with the University General Counsel, Rob Miller, who indicated that Eastern could legally having a daycare facility without infringing on local daycare providers as long as it was for employees of the university. Others might also benefit, e.g., students. Senator Hoberman (Fero) made the motion, with the friendly amendment (Coit /Brownson) to “Recommend to President Perry that he establish an institutional ad hoc committee to explore childcare options for Eastern faculty, staff, and students. It is the sense of Faculty Senate that previous committees have established a need for support of childcare by Eastern Illinois University.” Motion, and amendment, passed 13-0-0.

C. Michelle Murphy and Kris Kromphardt from Student Senate spoke with the Faculty Senate concerning their proposal to extend Booth Library hours since there is the perception that the library isn’t open as long as students would like it to be. Murphy indicated that a study of peer institutions’ hours was being conducted for comparison and Kromphardt said that a survey was being constructed to ask about hours before 8 AM, later closing on Friday and Saturdays, and expanded weekdays hours, e.g., closing at 2 AM. Senator Van Gunten suggested that the survey include a question as to when the students were using the library, and not just web access. Senator Browns added that they should also look at the hour-by-hour gate counts and that the survey should ask when the students wanted the library to be open. Senator Brownson added that students who arrive early to the library only seem to want to print and that there are other labs on campus that allow printing. Kromphardt said that student like the fact that print is charged directly to a student’s account at the library. Senator Brownson said that a study done about four years ago did get the library hours extended, but that any additional stretch of hours would require an additional shift since there is no overlap in the current shifts. Provost Lord stated that the students went to all councils last time with their request to extend hours and that President Hencken directed the extension.

VI. Adjournment at 4:00 p.m.

Future Agenda Items: Faculty Forum, Research, and Greening of Campus.

Respectfully submitted,

John Paul Stimac
The Eastern Integrative Experience

Why pursue Integrative Learning?
- In the complex modern world students need to draw on different perspectives.
- Developing integrative skills improves cognition and critical and reflective thinking.
- Much of learning in college takes place outside of formal classroom context.
- Integrative Learning builds on Eastern’s strengths of excellence, personal relationships, access and service.

What is Integrative Learning?
- Integrative learning includes connecting skills and knowledge from multiple sources and experiences, applying theory to practice in various settings, utilizing diverse and even contradictory points of view, and understanding issues and positions contextually. Significant knowledge within individual disciplines serves as the foundation, but integrative learning goes beyond academic boundaries. Indeed, integrative experiences often occur as learners address real-world problems, unscripted and sufficiently broad to require multiple areas of knowledge and multiple modes of inquiry, offering multiple solutions and benefiting from multiple perspectives.

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Statement on Integrative Learning
Carnegie Foundation and AAC&U

Characteristics of Integrative Learning
- Intentionality
- Reflection
- Metacognition
- Problem-solving
- Collaboration
- Engagement

Integrative Capstone Experiences
- Study Abroad
- Practica
- Research, Scholarship, Creative Activity
- Student Teaching
- Internships
- Service-Learning

What do these have in common?
- Each puts the student in practical situation in which they have problems to solve or challenges to overcome.
- Each requires a student to apply skills and knowledge acquired in one context to a situation in a different context.
How can we prepare students to take full advantage of these experiences?

- Instill habits of reflection
- Encourage students to be intentional about their choices, both academic and personal/professional
- Provide experiences in which students can practice integrating skills and knowledge from one context into another

“One of the oddest things about the university is that it calls itself a ‘community of scholars,’ yet it organizes itself in a way that conceals the intellectual links of that community from those who don’t already see them.”


Types of Integrative Learning

- **Horizontal**
- **Vertical**
- **Global**
- **Personal**
- **“Cosmic”**

Adapted in part from SUNY Oswego catalyst project

Horizontal Academic Integration

- Provides opportunities for students to reflect upon connections among their courses through exercises such as one-minute papers, focused class discussions, reflective assignments.

Vertical Academic Integration

- Encourages students to reach back and review/use skills used in prerequisite courses to enhance learning in current course.
- Encourages students to reach back to general education courses to provide grounding and inform learning in major courses.

Global Integration

- Encourages students to make connections among courses using an overarching concept or theory that applies to many courses.
Personal Integration

• Encourages students to apply academic learning to outside-of-class experiences.
• Encourages students to bring personal, social, cultural, and professional experiences to bear on what they are learning in class.

“ Cosmic” Integration

• Enables students to recognize the interconnectedness of all things.

Example 1: The Integrative Experience of an English major who intends to teach.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>English Major</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Academic Major</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>English Major</th>
<th>Class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11/9/08</td>
<td>Jiddu Krishnamurti</td>
<td>The Goal</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>The Goal</td>
<td>Jiddu Krishnamurti</td>
<td>The Goal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>What do you consider to be the end purpose of education?</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Is it not to bring about an integrated individual?</strong></td>
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<tr>
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<td>Jiddu Krishnamurti</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Questions to consider...

• What are we already doing to provide an integrative experience at department, college, and university levels?
• In what additional ways can we foster an integrative experience at department, college, and university levels?
• What is the value to your program of taking a more integrative approach?

Questions to consider...

• Where and when can we provide students opportunities for meaningful reflection?
• Where and how can we form stronger partnerships between academic and student affairs?
• What else can we do to encourage students to be smarter and more intentional about their own learning and lives?
Proposal for bringing a Daycare to Eastern Illinois University

Eastern is viewed as one of the top universities in the Midwest in its class. With reputable programs like the School Of Education, The School of Business and many others, Eastern is typically one of the top choices for its students and prospective students. Eastern prides itself on its diversity but, are they really accommodating their diverse community? One of the respected and registered organizations at Eastern and sometimes overlooked organization is our non-traditional students. Non-traditional students may be a small percentage of the Eastern population, but we still are EID too, and we often wonder, what exactly is Eastern doing for us? The question has risen whether it is feasible or even necessary for Eastern to bring a daycare to its campus. Speaking on behalf of the non-traditional students, the answer to that question is Yes, it is very necessary for Eastern to bring a daycare to its campus. With careful consideration and advice, I have considered all of the pros and cons of bringing a daycare center to Eastern Illinois University.

**Pros:**
- Retention and increased enrollment is a priority of EIU. By bringing a daycare to campus to accommodate students, more people would choose this university because there would be a safe place to leave their children when they are in class.
- Location and Convenience: many non-traditional students do not have a car. By bringing a daycare to Eastern, it would mean the facility would be in walking distance to our classes.
- Cost: This is one of the main pros for bringing a daycare to Eastern. Many of us our being robbed blind by the community daycares. As matriculating single parents who may or may not be working, and attending school, many of us do not bring home enough money to accommodate a single individual let alone a family. The daycares in this community are sticking us with additional charges that many if not most of us cannot afford, then we are stuck with making a decision of whether or not we want to continue school, or start working full time to pay for daycare. Another option is to open it to the public thereby creating an additional source of revenue.
- Increasing the job market: We all are living in today's society where things are a little rough for a lot of us. How great would it be for Eastern to bring more jobs into the community by opening up a daycare that services its students, faculty and staff. The daycare would allow students majoring in education to complete their practicum hours on campus.

**Cons:**
- Facility: this is hardly seen as a con because Eastern is constantly spending money bringing additional buildings and parking lots to the campus. Why not bring something of necessity to our campus that is truly beneficial to its students, faculty and staff?
- It was brought up in a previous meeting that it is not necessary to create funding for a single RSO. You are not creating funding or privileges for a single RSO, you are creating an option for an entire population on campus.

**Here is what we propose:**

Eastern opens up a daycare center for students, faculty and staff. The hours of operation would be from 7:30 a.m. to 9:45 p.m. Monday through Friday. We have to take into consideration that the earliest class begins at 8a.m. for students; the latest class for our graduate students ends at 9:30 p.m. Yes, we definitely need to consider our graduate students because they are EIU too! We propose that when school is not in session, it would not be necessary to stay open until 9:45 pm but still to open from the usual 7:45 to 5:00 p.m. to accommodate our faculty and staff, and those students who actually reside in Charleston and have to work during breaks. We also propose that you incorporate a fee in to everyone's tuition to make up for the cost of getting this project up off the ground and keep
it running. As a student we pay for numerous fees that we never utilize. We pay a fee for an attorney, which many of us never see and didn't know we had! We pay for the rec. center which a lot of us, never get to use because our schedule does not allow for us to go workout. Many of us have been paying for the marvelous Doudna Fine arts building, which if we do not have a class in there, we may never cross its threshold! Each student who utilizes the daycare could again register through Child Care Resource and Referral, get assigned their co-payment for the month, and that is their fee that they pay for the daycare services. Faculty and staff can pay a fee as well for utilizing the services. One of the two main purposes of this daycare is convenience and cost. Because of the high cost of child care center in the community many students are forced to choose between continuing their education or working full time to pay for child care. This should not have to be a choice because we obviously made the decision that we want to pursue a degree, which is what brought us down here in the first place. The daycare center would follow all the nutrition guidelines and health and safety guidelines set forth by the licensing department.

Let's keep in mind that some of our competing schools in Illinois accommodate their non-traditional students by providing an on campus daycare: Southern Illinois University, Western Illinois University, Northern Illinois University, and others.

Parenting students are a big part of EIU, and we should feel accommodated while pursuing our degree. While it is not easy being a student and a parent at the same time, it will bring all of us a great sense of relief to know, that our children are in a safe, close, respectable, daycare center that is not robbing us at the same time! After all; We Are EIU Too!
Introduction. The Faculty Senate began to discuss and study the child day care needs of the EIU community in the fall of 2004, and with the appointment of a Child Care Subcommittee, continued discussions through the spring. The issue is a complex one, affecting large numbers of students, faculty, and staff, and the Senate and Subcommittee have had limited time to focus on it. Further study of the whole issue is urgently needed. Nevertheless it seems appropriate and useful to present our findings and recommendations to this point, with the caveat that these are necessarily tentative.

Section I: Findings

1. History. Energetic discussions of this issue have gone on intermittently at EIU since at least 1980, testifying, in our view, both to the extent of the need and the difficulty of addressing it; clearly, this is an issue that will not go away.

Of particular significance in this regard is the work of the Child Care Center committee that, under the direction of Lynette Drake and Jayne Ozier, completed three years’ work in the spring of 1996. That committee’s final report, which remains a valuable document for current discussions, envisaged the construction of a Child Care Center with space for 120-150 children, to be constructed south of Campus Pond, that would include such features as multiple classrooms, playgrounds, a meeting room, and even a resource library for parents. Corporate providers would oversee the construction and operation of the center, and care would be available at a very reasonable cost of $75-$95 dollars per week per full-time child, with assistance available to staff and students. Bids from prospective providers were already under consideration, and the Committee’s hope was that the Center could open by Fall of 1997.

The plan, in short, seemed very well thought out and feasible. Why was it never acted upon? We are far from knowing the full particulars of the episode, but it appears that the key factors were the following:

- Cost: the center would have required an initial outlay of nearly one million dollars and —crucially— a continuing subsidy of roughly that amount each year.
- Risk: though the proposal was founded upon a careful preliminary needs assessment, via a questionnaire distributed to the entire university, there could be no guarantee of sufficient enrollments to sustain a center, so that a very large initial investment would have amounted to risk capital.
- Campus planning: the new building would cut down on space available for other uses.
- Community relations. A center on this scale would necessarily compete with the many existing private child care providers in the Charleston area, almost certainly driving many of them out of business. Dedicated and kind people who had devoted
many years to small-scale centers might suffer unfairly as an unintended consequence of EIU’s initiative.

Our own thought, as we look to the future, is that while the 1996 report remains a valuable planning document, the 1996 plan would probably be too ambitious in the present context. Though a newly constructed center remains an ideal solution, we should also look for the possibility of finding solutions on a smaller scale that could then grow incrementally. In particular, the possibility of using existing facilities for child care should be thoroughly investigated.

2. **Cost.** In our investigations of other institutions that have onsite day care, a somewhat counterintuitive picture emerges: universities are by no means able to deliver child care at rates near those of the private sector, but typically incur costs nearly double those of private providers. The point is important, because an obstacle to moving ahead with day care is the widespread tendency to assume that the university has natural advantages that should make the problem rather easy, i.e., capable of being solved at a low cost. In fact the university’s advantages prove illusory: the physical plant, supposedly available for free, is in fact being used at capacity, or is not suitable; the students who can work for free while earning course credit cannot (it turns out) be counted into adult-child ratios required by state law. Private providers are able to use their own homes as day cares and may be subject to less stringent licensing requirements.

The one existing institutional day care in the county, at Lake Land College, operates at a continuing subsidy in the 50% range, and the center proposed in 1996 would have required similar support. In looking at self-sufficient centers at other universities, we have seen prices that range as high as an incredible $1795 per child per month (*Chronicle of Higher Education*, February 25, 2005) for infant day care. Onsite daycare at EIU can be much less expensive than that, but it will always be more expensive than in the private sector. Almost certainly, it will require an ongoing subsidy from some combination of grants, student fees, alumni donations, and other sources identified by ingenious administrators.

But the **value** of onsite daycare would in our view make such expenditures completely, eminently worthwhile. Parents would benefit immeasurably from having their children close by, in a center where adult-child ratios were much higher than in private centers (due to the presence of students not “counted” by the state). Students would benefit from enhanced internship and work-study opportunities. The university would benefit from increased employee productivity and improved recruitment and retention of faculty and students.

3. **Needs Assessment.** A campus-wide study of child care needs conducted in Spring 1995 found a very high level of interest in and perceived need for onsite day care, with 48% of responding parents indicating that they had changed day care providers in the last year, 60% indicating that they had missed work or class due to child care complications, and 73% indicating that they would use EIU child care if it were available. These results apparently tracked rather closely with those of a much earlier study, conducted in 1986, cited in the later report.

Our own needs assessment was a more modest venture, more a quick poll than a systematic estimate. We wanted to determine whether there would be any likely support for EIU-sponsored daycare. To this end we collected the names of interested EIU parents, including students, faculty, and staff. A collateral benefit of this approach was that we now have a mailing list of some 145 parents who have expressed an interest in on-campus day care and in discussing their child care needs and options. In March, 2005, we e-mailed all members of
this group and invited them to complete an online questionnaire relating to their child care needs and present arrangements.

The results of this survey give us a picture that does / does not differ substantially from that reported in the earlier surveys. [I am currently working on this – JHP.]

4. **Child Care Resource and Referral; Lab School.** At our meeting of January 18, we were joined by invited guests Tami Duzan, of the Child Care Resource and Referral Project at EIU; and Dr. Mikki Meadows, Director of Eastern’s Lab School, both of whom spoke very informatively on how their particular work affects the child care equation at EIU.

CCR & R, funded by external grant monies, is a referral agency that helps parents in a six-county area locate day care providers. The terms of the grant forbid evaluating or recommending one provider over another, so this is strictly a listing agency. In the first half of this fiscal year, 10 EIU staff members and 35 students have made use of the service. We were, in general, impressed by the way this kind of information sharing presents a creative complement to the bricks-and-mortar approach to the child care issue—another important piece of the puzzle. Clearly, those who have launched the Project deserve the community’s gratitude for the service provided. However, looking at the work of CCR & R from the point of view of the needs of the EIU community, we noted that the inability to offer qualitative advice is a serious limitation; for quality is of course the chief concern of parents. Perhaps for this reason, the level of use of the center by the EIU community—just 45 inquiries in six months—appears to be low.

The work of Eastern’s Lab School is, strictly speaking, tangential to our concern with child day care. As Director of the Lab School, Dr. Meadows stressed repeatedly and eloquently that the Lab School is and must be a classroom dedicated to the education of EIU students, and not a child care facility serving the needs of EIU parents. The service it provides to parents and children is that of educational enrichment, not of child care or babysitting; its chief purpose in any case is to further the education of enrolled EIU students who are there to supervise and observe the children in the course of completing course work. For this reason the Lab School operates limited hours (two hour sessions in the morning and afternoon) that keep it from functioning effectively as a day care facility, and there seems to be no special concern with keeping the sessions enrolled to capacity. Extended sessions have been offered to parents at least once in the past on a trial basis, but there appeared to be insufficient interest to support such a program.

The premise that the Lab School exists to benefit students first and children and their parents secondarily, and to provide educational enrichment rather than day care *per se,* seems to us quite appropriate and right as far as it goes. Such clear focus on classroom goals is the heart of excellent teaching. Nevertheless, we hope that discussion of the role of the Lab School will not end here. It is valid as well to look at the facility from the point of view of the larger community and its needs, asking whether its full potential has been realized. Far and away the most child-friendly environment on campus, the Lab school may be, from this community point of view, somewhat underused, and we recommend a more systematic study of possibilities for expanded usage. The invitation to parents to enroll children for extended sessions should be repeated, and it seems to us that it would be very worthwhile to begin a dialogue with parents of Lab school children as to their suggestions for the facility and the program. In saying this, we should stress that children enrolled in the Lab School sessions as presently offered seem, by all indications, to be having an excellent experience.
5. Eastern Student Parents Association. At our April 5 meeting, we were joined by invited representatives of a new campus organization, The Eastern Student Parents Association. The President, Teresa Lindsay; secretary, Aliyah Levi; and treasurer, Kelika Slaughter all spoke very informatively of the challenges they and members of their organization have faced as students with young children. All concurred that the difficulties they have experienced have been greater than they expected and — a matter of particular concern — greater than they had been led to believe at the time they made the decision to come to EIU. Apparently there is a vague but fairly widespread misconception that onsite day care is in fact available at Eastern. The confusion, arising from the existence of the Lab School and the proximity to campus of two large child care centers, is quite understandable, but needs to be scrupulously debunked in recruitment of both students and faculty.

The narrative evidence of the ESPA representatives generally confirmed the data in our informal survey. Student parents report experiencing great difficulty in finding day care that is close to campus, begins when the school year does, remains open whenever class is in session, and is generally dependable and of high quality. All three visitors reported very significant difficulty in meeting academic obligations within the framework of family needs, to the point of having seriously questioned the feasibility of continuing as Eastern students. Students have sometimes found themselves forced to miss class or to bring children to class; the lack of adequate public transportation in Charleston can make it very hard to get the family shopping done. Our visitors felt that such concerns may seriously impact EIU’s ability to attract minority students.

What was particularly interesting and impressive in our visitors’ presentation was their account of how they have responded to these difficulties. Their RSO has provided advice and moral support for student parents, and a network within which parents can exchange babysitting with trusted fellow student parents. Though ESPA would welcome subsidized onsite day care as an ideal solution, their own informal, low-profile efforts have already effected dramatic improvements in the lives of at least some student parents. Teresa Lindsay in particular declared that she would have left Eastern if not for having found babysitting through ESPA.

Section II: Recommendations

These are given in very rough order of priority, starting with the most important and firmly recommended. Once again, however, we would stress the tentative nature of our findings and advice: all recommendations should be considered subject to revision or retraction in light of further study.

1. Re-commission the ad hoc committee on child care. EIU should immediately establish a Child Care committee to continue work on this issue. The committee should have regular weekly meetings and full institutional support, in the form of release time or reduction of other duties for at least the chair and the vice chair. The committee’s charge would be to create within the year explicit, detailed plans for facilities or programs or both that would significantly improve the quality and availability of day care for Eastern faculty, staff, and students.

2. Investigate the possibility of partnerships with local day care centers and in-home providers. The subject of such partnerships has arisen repeatedly in our discussions and in those of the committees before us, but seems never to have been
extensively pursued. In the past the effort to construct our own center foundered on the issue of cost. An alternative approach might be to provide direct subsidies to local providers that care for the children of EIU parents, taking advantage of what seems to be the inherently greater efficiency of the private sector. Subsidies could be given both on a per-child basis and in the form of grants for equipment (e.g., swings) and improvement of facilities. In return Eastern could ask for the right to monitor and evaluate all participating providers, in a non-intrusive way, by giving questionnaires to participating EIU parents. Such questionnaires could be used to give parents the kind of qualitative advice that CCR&R currently withholds, and to provide useful feedback and recommendations to the providers themselves. In the process some of EIU’s academic expertise in child care would find direct application in the community.

Such a program could be started rather quickly and on a small scale, then expanded over time. Properly administered, it could improve campus-community relations and provide many of the same opportunities for internship, laboratory, and work-study experiences as an onsite center. Though an on-campus center remains our preferred and ideal solution, this “Plan B” deserves serious consideration.

3. **Obtain immediate and permanent funding for the Eastern Student Parents Association, and give it stronger institutional standing.** While child care has been discussed endlessly by faculty and administrative committees, so far to no tangible result, this student group has made substantial progress in addressing the child care needs of its membership. Accordingly, it deserves reliable and vigorous support from the university. ESPA differs from all other RSOs in that its work concerns the most vital concerns of its members—the welfare of their children—and addresses the most crucial factor in their academic success at Eastern. Accordingly, it should be separated from other RSOs, protected from the uncertainties of University Board funding, and more fully integrated into the institution, on the model of such organizations as *The Daily Eastern News* and the athletic teams. The possibility of earning academic credit for work in the organization should be explored, as should possible ties to classes in child care.

Funding for ESPA for AY ’05 might address such items as a get-acquainted banquet or mixer in August; a parents-and-kids party at some point; shopping field trips for the members; T-shirts; and the printing of an Eastern Student Parents directory for the year. Budgets for future years would depend on the scope of the group’s activities.

4. **Explore the possibility of extended sessions at the Lab School.** Education of Eastern students must remain the Lab School’s primary and overriding priority, but within this constraint it might still be possible to expand the sessions to cover full half-days, with substantial benefits to the work and study schedules of participating parents. The experiment, which has been tried once before, seems at least worth repeating.

In general, it seems worthwhile to look at the Lab School from the community-benefit standpoint as well as the academic-mission standpoint. Quite possibly, the facility is already at or near its optimal usage from both standpoints. But we have not been able to pursue the question, and believe that it merits further study.
5. **Set up an online discussion group, using the parents’ list compiled for our pilot study.** Such a listserv would allow members to share information and advice about child care in Charleston, and also to discuss the pros and cons of initiatives like those outlined above, and others that might arise spontaneously from the interchange.