

August 28, 2008
Re: Senate Report

Dear AP Council,

The Academic Senate met last night, August 27th, for the first time this semester. For the most part it was an opportunity to welcome new members and establish protocols; however, there were some important reports, which I would like to pass along.

President Bowman noted that this was going to be a conservative spending year, as we only received a \$2.1 million increase in our budget. Despite our economic woes, he noted some good news: \$10 million in private gifts last year; 65% graduation rate; an Acceptance Rate up 10 points that rivals at least 4 schools in the Big Ten. He also noted that the university remained committed to the mid-year plan for raises, though he did not specify to whom these raises would go.

Dr. Everts, our new Provost, noted the enrollment numbers (I didn't write them down but I believe they were 20, 450+ total, 3400 freshmen or close to that). She also noted that CAST and COB have begun their dean searches.

V.P. Adams recognized the "smoothest" move-in he has ever seen and those involved. He also recognized that while we are down in room capacity that as soon as Manchester comes back on line we will be flush. He also mentioned something about Vrooman(sp?) but I had no idea to what he was referring. He also wanted everyone to know that they were monitoring the new meal plans. Last, he noted that the CIRT responded Tuesday night when a student at a fraternity was critically injured. He offered few specifics except to say that CIRT responded as it should and that the family was now in Normal.

V.P. Bragg did not have a lot of great news, as one would expect in this market; however, he did assure us that I.S.U. was well protected with limited exposure to Freddie Mac and Sallie Mae. The K&R project ran into some problems this summer due to bids coming in higher than expected, primarily due to costs of steel and petroleum products. He did note the demolition of Walker, Dunn, and Barton that would take place this week. One piece of good news we will all look forward to is that on Friday at 10am Dr. Bowman will officially open the new south side chiller plant. I am sure we will all attend. The last piece of business he covered was the "completion" of Phase 1 of the Stevenson project. A number of people responded critically to any implication that the project was done. The furniture has been ordered but not delivered; the noise is unbearable; etc. One Senator asked if there was any way that staff, who came in on their own time, could be paid for overtime. It was a much more feisty meeting than many of us expected. If you hear of anyone complaining about their room, you can always tell them to be thankful there are not in Stevenson for the semester. Dr. Bragg, however, would assure you that they are doing everything in their power to make sure that the transition is as smooth as possible. I am sure Dr. Bragg will be reporting again concerning the Stevenson project.

Dr. Bowman concluded the meeting by making the “Annual Announcement of Surveillance Equipment.” There are a number of cameras posted around campus. I presume they are looking in all the right places.

Thank you again for the opportunity to represent this august body in the Academic Senate. I look forward to another interesting year with the A.P. Council and to working with such a remarkable group of people.

Cheers,

Ron

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