November 19, 2008
Senate Report to AP Council

The last meeting of the Senate was sparsely attended, probably due to the timing. I am a bit surprised that they were able to come up with a quorum. We started again with a report from Lane Crothers. Amid rumors of 5-6% cuts (take-backs this year) and possible 10% cuts next year, the IBHE-FAC discussed an ISBE Career Clusters Initiative. Basically this is an initiative to track ninth graders in both academic and non-academic directions to get those students the remedial help they need. As Crothers pointed out, “the question is whether or not if you take a test in the ninth grade, you have your entire destiny laid out before you.”

Dr. Bowman, in his remarks, offered some positive news in light of economic woes, but reminded us, “There is an awful lot of bad news out there, not the least of which is that the projected overall state budget deficit for this fiscal year is $2.8 billion.” The Governor, according to Bowman, stepped into the budget deficit discussions and decided how this would be dealt with without talking to anyone in Springfield. He wants to hold back 8% of our appropriation, which would be about $6.5 million, a big chunk when you consider the total was only $85 million. Dr. Bowman was pretty confident the governor wouldn’t be able to do this. The president noted that faculty and staff salaries are “one of our highest priorities, so we are going to do everything possible to protect that.”

The rest of the meeting passed without incident and ended earlier than any meeting in the last three semesters.

Cheers,

Ron

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