

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

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MAR 09 2010

Meeting of Academic and Student Affairs Committee

SECRETARY OF THE BOARD

DECEMBER 17, 2009

This meeting of the Academic and Student Affairs Committee was held on December 17, 2009 at 4:30 p.m. via videoconference, with video connections at the three campuses. Trustee Hasara welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked Dr. Thompson to call the roll. The following members were present: Dr. Frances G. Carroll*, Ms. Karen Hasara, Dr. Timothy N. Koritz***, Mr. Lawrence Oliver II, Mr. Carlos Tortolero, Mr. Bogdan V. Zavorotny, Mr. Matthew M. Reschke, and Mr. Derek R. Felix*. Also present were Dr. Stanley O. Ikenberry, Dr. Mrinalini Rao, Dr. Renee Romano, Mr. Thomas Hardy, Mr. Thomas R. Bearrows, Dr. Catherine Eisenhart, and Dr. Tih-Fen Ting. Mr. Paul Wood, a reporter from the News-Gazette, was on the phone. Dr. Nicholas Burbules, Dr. Matthew Wheeler, and Dr. Joyce Tolliver, arrived late.

Ms. Hasara thanked the group for attending the meeting, especially at such a busy time. She stated that the University is going through a difficult period, and that there is serious work to do. Ms. Hasara said that she thinks that the Academic and Student Affairs Committee is the most important committee of the Board, and she would like the committee members to strive to help make this committee as good as it can be.

Ms. Hasara referred to materials that Dr. Rao previously sent to the committee, and also mentioned Dr. Rao's presentation at the prior Board meeting. Ms. Hasara said that the strategic plans for each campus are especially useful and would like the committee to review them over

* Attended via telephone

** Dr. Koritz arrived after the roll call.

the next year. She asked Dr. Ikenberry if he could define the major issues that he thinks would be within the purview of the committee and important for the committee's consideration.

Dr. Ikenberry thanked Ms. Hasara, and said he would talk about the ways that the committee might approach its work. He said that since this committee touches almost every area of the University, it would be difficult to define its purview precisely. He then listed three broad areas that he suggested the committee might consider for its investigation.

Academic Mission and Programs: Dr. Ikenberry said the committee might consider how the University should address its academic mission in terms of undergraduate study, graduate study, professional education, research, and engagement. He stated the members would need to examine the scope of University programs and evaluate overlaps. He said that in some instances, overlaps are beneficial, but it would be useful for the committee to consider conditions under which the University might reduce or add programs.

Resources: Dr. Ikenberry said that the committee could examine faculty resources, including policies to grow and maintain faculty, such as tenure and promotion and sabbatical leaves. He also said it could include libraries, information systems, and other resources.

Evidence of Quality and Performance: Dr. Ikenberry said that the committee may want to consider areas that need attention and examine quality and performance indicators. He referred to the recent Higher Learning Commission accreditation visit in Urbana as an example. Another example he cited was the accreditation of professional schools within the University. He stated that it would be beneficial to examine mechanisms of quality control for academic programs, and noted that the National Research Council's

Assessment of Doctorate Programs will soon be released. He said this report will be useful regarding programs on the Urbana and Chicago campuses.

Dr. Ikenberry stressed that his suggestions constitute a broad road map, with an emphasis on 'Program Scope and Mission,' 'Resources and Support,' and 'Outcomes or Overall Quality.' He noted there was room within each category for the committee to focus on specific areas. He stated that he thinks that over a period of a year or more, it would be possible for the committee to obtain a solid grasp of issues concerning academic programming. He then said that he welcomed suggestions and comments from the committee.

Ms. Hasara said she found the suggestions for the committee's work to be excellent guidance. She stated that she attended one accreditation meeting in Urbana, and also read the self-study for that campus. She indicated that these experiences were helpful in understanding some aspects of accreditation, and thought that reading the self study reports would be helpful for new Board members. She then asked when there might be site visits from accrediting bodies for the other two campuses. Dr. Rao responded and said that the Chicago campus' accreditation took place in 2006-2007, noting that the campus was reaccredited with high praise. She stated that Springfield's accreditation was conducted in 2008-2009. Dr. Rao explained that campus accreditation occurs every ten years, and reported that all three campuses have been reaccredited within the past three years. Ms. Hasara said that a review of the self-study reports for each campus by committee members would be helpful prior to the next committee meeting.

Dr. Ikenberry suggested that the committee focus on accreditation at one of its meetings, and said that faculty members may be able to share some of their responses to suggestions or recommendations from the accreditation reports. Dr. Rao stated that it can take a few months

after the site visit to receive the actual report, indicating that the report of the Urbana campus' accreditation visit may not be available yet. Ms. Hasara inquired about the National Research Council's report, and Dr. Ikenberry stated that he would distribute it to the committee as soon as it is issued.

Ms. Hasara asked if there were any questions or comments from committee members. She also asked for suggestions for topics for upcoming meetings, and Mr. Zavorotny responded that he had a concern about the grading system employed at the Chicago campus. He explained that plus and minus grades (i.e., B+ or B-) are not given on the Chicago campus, and he asked for input from the committee. Ms. Hasara asked Dr. Ikenberry to respond. Dr. Ikenberry stated that he would find plus or minus grading helpful as a faculty member, because it allows for more leeway in grading. He advised Mr. Zavorotny to initiate a discussion of this on the Chicago campus, and Mr. Zavorotny said that he had already spoken to Dr. Rao, Dr. Tanner, and others. Ms. Hasara asked if grading policies were a discretionary matter for each campus, which Dr. Ikenberry confirmed. Dr. Ikenberry suggested that since grading is a matter under the control of the senates at the campuses, Mr. Zavorotny might contact the senate at Chicago to discuss this matter.

Next, Ms. Hasara asked if the student trustees had further questions or comments. Mr. Reschke described Mr. Tortolero's visit to the Urbana campus, noting that he and Mr. Tortolero had dinner at a dining hall with other students. He said it was helpful, and he encouraged this type of trustee-student interaction. Mr. Tortolero added that he visited all three campuses. Ms. Hasara asked if there were any additional questions, and Dr. Eisenhart said she agreed with Mr. Reschke's assertion that it is important for the trustees to learn about the three campuses. She

stated that it would also be helpful for the committee members to meet with the faculty as a group. Dr. Ting asked if a request for agenda items for future committee meetings would be issued, and wondered where such requests for discussion at committee meetings might be directed. Ms. Hasara said that such requests should be sent to the Board secretary at the Board of Trustees office.

Ms. Hasara said that the Board members are anxious to learn about the campuses, and liked the idea of a tour when visiting each campus for meetings. She and Dr. Thompson discussed a potential visit to the Research Park in March 2010 when the Board meets in Urbana.

Dr. Burbules stated that while he did not want to speak for others, he appreciates the opportunity to interact with the committee. He said that especially in terms of academic issues, it might be beneficial to have a dialog between faculty and the committee. He mentioned that the chair and vice chair of the previous committee usually met over breakfast before Board meetings, and Ms. Hasara indicated that a new schedule of committee meetings would allow for longer discussions. She proposed meeting at 4:00 p.m. in the future on the day before the Board of Trustees meetings. She noted that the meetings would be open, unless issues arise that require an executive session. She then suggested meeting at 4:00 p.m. on February 8, May 19, and September 15. She explained that a meeting of the Committee to Assist in the Selection of a President is scheduled for February 9, and the anticipated dates for the Board of Trustees meetings are May 20 and September 16, but yet to be announced. Ms. Hasara proposed meeting in Chicago on February 8 and May 19, and in September in Urbana. Discussion of availability followed, and the committee members agreed to check their calendars. Mr. Koritz stated that the afternoon prior to the day of a Board meeting would work well for future committee meetings.

Ms. Hasara asked for recommendations for the focus of the meeting in February, suggesting that the accreditation reports from the three campuses might be a good place to start. Dr. Ikenberry agreed, and said it would be good for the committee to receive an overview of each campus. He said it would also be beneficial to see how each campus has responded to the findings reported by each accreditation team. Ms. Hasara asked if the Urbana report would be available soon, and Dr. Ikenberry said that the preliminary report might be available in time for the meeting. Dr. Ikenberry also suggested that the committee review the self-study that was completed by the campus, and Ms. Hasara agreed that would also be beneficial. She asked if anyone else had suggestions for the focus for the February meeting, and welcomed questions or comments. Dr. Carroll said she thought the plan sounded excellent, and Dr. Koritz added that the accreditation reports are critical and should be reviewed. Ms. Hasara said they should be able to get the Chicago and Springfield reports quickly, and noted that the strategic plans are also helpful. Dr. Ikenberry suggested that a potential agenda item going forward might be to consider items on the upcoming Board of Trustees agenda that are within the purview of the committee. He suggested that the committee review pertinent items before they are presented to the full Board, and noted that the Board chair's support of academic program items would be helpful at Board meetings. Ms. Hasara agreed.


Mr. Zavorotny asked how he could invite faculty to join committee discussions. Ms. Hasara stated that meetings are open, and encouraged Mr. Zavorotny to invite others he thought might be interested in the committee's discussions. She asked if there were any additional questions, and hearing none, she thanked all for attending the meeting and said she thought the discussion had been good. The meeting concluded at 5:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Michele M. Thompson

Clerk



Karen Hasara

Chair