

Minutes
Urbana-Champaign Senate Meeting
September 14, 2009

A special meeting of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Senate was called to order at 3:15 p.m. on the 3rd floor of the Levis Faculty Center with Interim Provost Robert Easter presiding.

Senate Executive Committee Report

Senator Joyce Tolliver (LAS), Chair of the Senate Executive Committee (SEC), provided the following report.

At the door, please pick up materials for today's special meeting. We ask that all non-senators adhere to their assigned seating - administrators, committee members, those requesting floor privileges, and media. Photographers/videographers need to stay in the roped-in area near the entrance to this room. All non-senators and non-media visitors will be directed to additional seating on the second floor of this building with a live audio-video feed of all open sessions of this meeting.

Floor privileges approved at the August 31 Senate meeting are still in effect for Professors Harris Lewin, May Berenbaum, and Larry Schook, and for Mike Ross, Director of the Krannert Center for the Performing Arts (KCPA). Floor privileges for today's meeting, to speak to SC.10.01B, Senate Resolution on Admissions Review Commission (ARC) Report, have been requested for Professor Paul Diehl, Political Science; Professor C. K. Gunsalus, Business Administration and Coordinator of Undergraduate Education, College of Business; and Professor John Braden, Agricultural and Consumer Economics.

I move that such privileges be granted (there was no objection).

Tellers for today's meeting are Senators Clarence Lang (LAS), Kim Graber (AHS), and David Olsen (BUS).

The rapidly unfolding events of the past four days have represented a turning point in the relationship between the Board of Trustees and the Senate and other University governance groups.

The new Board held its first meeting on Thursday. The following day, Matt Wheeler (SEC Vice Chair), Nick Burbules (SEC past Chair), and I met with Chris Kennedy, the Board's Chair, and with Trustee Pamela Strobel, to discuss shared governance and the benefits of forming a new kind of relationship between faculty governance bodies and the Board. They expressed willingness to attend a campus senate meeting. We also discussed the process of personnel review that needs to be followed in light of legal requirements as well as the demands of personal fairness.

A press release was issued today by the Board of Trustees announcing the formation of an *ad hoc* personnel review subcommittee that will be charged with reporting its recommendations to the full Board by its November 12 meeting.

Matt, Nick, and I considered our conversation with Trustees Kennedy and Strobel to be so significant as to necessitate a revision to the SEC Resolution, even though we knew there was very little time before our meeting today. We decided we must ask our colleagues on the Senate Executive Committee to hold yet one more extra meeting, and that we must ask you, our colleagues on the Senate, to consider yet another draft of the Resolution.

As a result, the Senate Executive Committee met yesterday to draft a revised version of our Resolution, one that reflects the promise of a more richly collaborative relationship with the new Board. You were advised last night that this version of the Resolution (SC10.01B) was posted on the Senate website and it is printed on the back of today's agenda.

President B. Joseph White

President B. Joseph White made the following prepared remarks:

Two weeks ago, I told you I regretted the admissions problems that occurred on this campus. I told you that I did not admit candidates noted as denials, nor did I ask or expect them to be admitted. I did not direct the admission of any candidate. The Mikva Commission report is consistent with this record.

Today, I want to tell you things I did as president.

For four-and-a-half years, I have worked to insulate this University from external pressures in an extremely difficult and intensely political environment. From the outset, I understood that was my job.

I stood behind every admission denial, no matter who the advocates or how persistent they were.

I said no when I was told that Governor Blagojevich's office wanted a new IGPA research report killed rather than published.

I said no when a senior aide to Governor Blagojevich told me the administration was at war and I was in their army. He asked if I had read the organization chart. He berated me for not supporting the Gross Receipts Tax proposal. I told the aide that the president of the University reports to a board, that I am independent and not in anyone's army and that I would not support bad policy.

Throughout my presidency, I have consistently said "no" when no was the right answer. I have protected the University's autonomy. I have defended faculty freedoms of inquiry and expression. That was my job and I did it.

So let me be clear. The notion that I would submit to pressure - or apply pressure - for admissions or anything else in order to please the high and mighty is dead wrong. I never did. It would have been completely out of character. I am not and never have been a servant of power.

I came to Illinois in 2005 a fiercely independent person and high integrity leader. I still am.

I appreciate your listening. I welcome your comments and questions.

Senator Tom Overbye (ENGR) inquired about the reference to President White's statement that on occasion he needed to "stretch" admissions requirements. The President replied that this was an Urbana campus matter.

Senator Peter Loeb (LAS) wanted to know if the President had asked what steps beyond usual procedures would be taken to handle his inquiring as President about the admission of a student. President White responded that he had not.

Senator David Wall (LAS) asked President White what he thinks will come next. The President stated that policies are being put in place to protect the admissions process and that he did not come here to campaign for another four-and-a-half years.

In response to a query from Senator Carey Ash (GRAD), President B. Joseph White said that yes, he does bear responsibility for what happened and he has stated as such.

Chancellor Richard Herman

Chancellor Herman quoted a line from a Kenny Rogers song "The best you can hope for is to die in your sleep." The Chancellor disagreed with this sentiment and reiterated his desire to remain at Illinois as long as his contributions were appreciated.

Senator Bettina Francis (LAS) transmitted a plea from Ms. Catherine Key, University of Illinois alum and donor, for the Senate to consider voting to retain Chancellor Richard Herman in light of his significant achievements for the campus.

Senator Chu-Yung Chen (LAS) asked the Chancellor what a "no" vote today would mean to him. Dr. Herman replied that it would be consistent with the recommendations of the Mikva Commission, adding that regardless of the result of today's vote, the faculty voice being heard is an important step in this process.

Senator David Brown (EDUC) asked for the Chancellor's reaction to a letter in the September 9 *News-Gazette*, signed by eight former campus administrators suggesting that the Category I program did not exist prior to the current administration. The Chancellor responded that he has never made allegations against anyone and that he inherited an increasingly politicized environment.

Public Comments

KCPA Director Mike Ross admitted he was troubled by the resolution before the Senate, but he appreciated the regret displayed from administrators. Mr. Ross urged senators to vote to allow Chancellor Herman to continue in his current position, and he indicated that there are scores of his colleagues that agree with him.

Professor Paul Diehl expressed support for the resolution, adding that even those who oppose the resolution appreciate the pain that the families of Chancellor Herman and President White have experienced. Professor Diehl rejected the balance sheet scenario, i.e., achievements outweigh failures.

Professor John Braden read and entered into the record of today's meeting, the aforementioned September 9 letter published in the *News-Gazette* (and in the September 14 *Chicago Tribune*).*

Senator Tolliver moved to suspend Senate Standing Rule 1 so the Senate could continue its business beyond 5:15 p.m., in this case, until 6:00 p.m. The motion passed by voice vote.

Executive Session

By show of hands (81-71), the Senate approved a motion to enter Executive Session at 4:10 p.m. under provision of one of the exceptions to the Open Meetings Act – A public body may hold closed meetings to consider the performance of specific employees. The Senate emerged from Executive Session at 5:45 p.m.

Proposals for Action

09/14/09-01 Dr. Easter presented for action SC.10.01A*, Senate Resolution on the Admissions Review Commission (ARC) Report, as amended. (The Senate had substituted an amended SC.10.01A for SC.10.01B.) Senator Carey Ash (GRAD) moved to suspend Senate Standing Rule 1 so the Senate could continue its business beyond 6:00 p.m. By show of hands (79-65), the motion failed to garner the 2/3 vote needed to pass and was lost.

09/14/09-02 By written ballot (98-55), SC.10.01A was approved, as amended.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

Robert C. Damrau, Senate Clerk

*Filed with the Senate Clerk and incorporated by reference in these Minutes.