

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN



Office of the Senate

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Report of the September 18, 2009
Illinois Board of Higher Education Faculty Advisory Council

The Faculty Advisory Council (FAC) of the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) held a regularly scheduled meeting on Friday September 18, 2009 at Spoon River College, Illinois. The meeting was called to order by Chair John Bennett at 9AM. President Robert Ritschel of Spoon River College welcomed the group to his college.

The meeting began with an update on the admissions scandal at U of I followed by a discussion of the American Diploma Project (ADP) Core Standards. Efforts are underway at the national and state levels to establish standards for core subject areas (English and Mathematics) as minimum competency requirements for high school graduates entering college. The Illinois efforts include a series of meetings among representatives of state high schools and colleges to establish such standards in the two subject areas. Now that the U.S. Department of Education report on such standards is available, the Illinois activities for adopting its standards have re-started. A meeting of the two core subject task groups is scheduled for Monday September 28 in Springfield.

Next, a discussion was held on the Monetary Award Program (MAP) budget cut for the current year. The state's funding for this program was cut in half for the 2009-10 year after students had received their award letters for the year. The cut is expected to affect 138,000 students state-wide. MAP offers need-based grants to low-income Illinois students. In FY 2009, 6,037 students at the Urbana-Champaign campus received \$25,803,600 from the MAP fund. In light of the budget cut, the Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC) which administers MAP decided that students will receive full funds for the Fall 2009 semester and zero dollars for the Spring 2010 semester. The concern is that the affected students are most likely those with least additional resources and thus some may be unable to attend college next semester. Students who do not attend college will not receive federal financial assistance either. In addition, the university will lose any funds it would have received from the federal government for those students. A number of public hearings are to be held across the state to alert the public of this crisis and to encourage state officials to restore funding for the program immediately and before it is too late. A total of 13,048 students from the three campuses of the University of Illinois received \$52,954,500 in MAP grants during the 2009-10 academic year.

The next subject of discussion was appointing an active faculty member from Illinois public universities and colleges to the Illinois Board of Higher Education. The Faculty Advisory Council decided to forward two names to the Governor for his consideration for appointment to the Board. The FAC also held a discussion on potential speakers to be nominated for speaking at the upcoming IBHE meetings.

The three FAC caucuses (Public Universities, Independent Institutions and Community College) held their separate meetings and established agenda items of interest to consider for the upcoming year. The major items selected by the Public Universities Caucus for action during the current year included funding for higher education and faculty representation on the IBHE and individual institutions' boards of trustees.

Per FAC Executive Committee, four FAC committees were formed with the task of each group focusing on activities related to one of the four main goals of the Public Agenda adopted by the Illinois legislation (see <http://www.IBHE.org>). The meeting adjourned at 2:30. Next FAC meeting is scheduled for October 16 at Northern Illinois University.

Respectfully Submitted,
Abbas Aminmansour
September 23, 2009