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MEMORANDUM

TO: Robert Sutton, President
SLA Faculty Assembly

FROM: Paul Carlin, Chair
SLA Resources and Planning Committee

SUBJECT: Annual Committee Report

DATE: May 28, 2008

As usual the Committee met monthly with Dean White and Associate Dean Hanson and provided advice and feedback to the administrative leadership on matters relating to budget and resources.

Key activities included review and recommendation concerning Search Requests and Signature Center proposals. Future committees should consider how best to meet this responsibility. The Dean wanted the Committee to provide a rank ordering of Signature Center proposals. I suggested, instead, because of the short turnaround time, that each proposal be reviewed separately (in advance) by one of the Committee members and that evaluation be discussed in Committee...but no ranking would be provided. It seems to me there is too much inherent conflict of interest if the Committee is to rank proposals. Ideally each member should have looked at all of the proposals and evaluated one but I think the idea of simply passing on to the Dean an evaluation is better than ranking. Some proposals will have advocates on the Committee and others not. While everyone will try to make decisions with their school hat on, it is a difficult situation. It seems to me that with both Search Requests and proposals for funding (whether Signature Center or otherwise) an evaluation and placement into a category such as 'sound and well-thought out'; 'sound but minor problems, lack of clarity in request' or 'unsound—specific reason' would be helpful to the Dean but would be less divisive and easier to defend.

In addition the Committee considered the effect of summer enrollment and tuition revenue relative to expense on the School's budget. Summer enrollment has been trending down the last few years. Associate Dean Hanson replied that it was very difficult, conceptually, to get a handle on a question like, "Is the School better off, financially, with summer teaching and, if so, how much better off?" We also heard about the Campus's Enrollment Shaping Initiative and its potential for helping the School. Unfortunately, in the short run, it costs the School a substantial sum of money. We hope this falls into the category of 'needing to spend money to make money' and that the investment will pay off handsomely for the School in new tuition dollars that will not be siphoned off to pay for administrative overhead. The Committee also provided advice to the Dean on the need for replacement blinds on the 4th and 5th floors of Cavanaugh. The existing drapes are probably as old as the building and many (most?) have structural damage that prevents them from being hung properly. They present a poor image at recruiting time. The Dean indicated, at our last meeting, that the existing drapes for 4th and 5th floor offices will be replaced by blinds but that the expense will hit on next year's budget.

The Committee also raised the question of standard offices for all faculty. I had always assumed that one of the benefits of taking over the entire building was that it would be big enough that all faculty could have an office of 'standard' size, as defined by Indiana University. The Committee was told that was never part of the planning and that creating larger offices in Cavanaugh for all faculty is probably not feasible. We would need a new building for that. I have been in SLA for 23 years. It is disappointing that most faculty on the fifth floor still have sub-standard offices and that the situation is likely to continue for another decade or longer.

The Committee was also informed about, and given opportunity to comment on, a number of other School issues including upgrading of lobbies on the second and third floors, renovation of the basement of Cavanaugh, indirect cost recovery allocation formula for the new Institute for Research on Social Issues (IRSI), and the establishment of the Confucius Institute on the first floor.

Gabriele Bersier, Bill Gronfein, Richard Gunderman, Jack McKivigan, and Scott Weeden (Agenda Council) regularly attended the meetings, performed assigned work outside of the meetings and contributed valuable insights for the Committee's deliberations.