

IFC Academic Affairs Committee - Meeting Notes

Thursday, April 28th from 11a-1p in UL 2115J

Members Present: Brothers, Devine, Gibau, Kitchens, Marrs, Smith, Wright (Chair), Watt;
Guests Present: Luzar

11:00-11:05. Welcome and Introductions. The Chair called the meeting to order and welcomed the members.

11:05-11:15. IUPUI Faculty Utilization of Sabbatical Leaves. Bruce Kitchens presented data he collated on the number of applicants, number of approved, etc. Since all tenure track faculty are eligible every seven years, he noted that approximately 14% of the faculty would be eligible in any given year. He noted that sabbatical leaves are an important mechanism for promoting a strong and vital academic life on campus. In 2010-2011, only 4.89% of IUPUI faculty took a sabbatical, compared with 8.92% of IUB faculty. The committee discussed the data and expressed concern that faculty at IUPUI were underutilizing this important benefit that could enhance the academic environment and were unanimous in recommending that all faculty should consider taking sabbaticals when they are eligible. The committee recommended that the IFC Executive Committee appoint an ad-hoc committee to meet with the Campus Sabbatical Committee next year to discuss ways to encourage faculty to take sabbaticals as well as to define the purpose of sabbaticals and examine their importance for the teaching, research, and service mission of the campus.

11:15-11:55. Follow-Up Discussion of the Status of the IUPUI Honors College. The Chair welcomed, Dr. E. Jane Luzar, Founding Dean, IUPUI Honors College and invited her to comment on three specific questions that were generated by committee members following her last visit. Specifically, she shared the following information:

1. *What efforts have has the Honors College made to develop online components, hybrid, online/distance learning opportunities?* Dean Luzar reported that there are a small number of courses that are official "Honors College" courses. In most cases, Honors courses are taught by faculty who do not have full time appointments in the Honors College. The majority of honors courses are offered in traditional academic units using an "honors option" section associated with a standing course. There are no honors-specific initiatives to develop online or distance/learning opportunities. Those that do exist are because of the initiative of individual faculty with the support of their academic units.

2. *What connections does the Honors College have with the SPAN initiative and other efforts to integrate middle and high school students who enroll in classes at IUPUI?* Dean Luzar reported that she met with Johnny Russell last year to discuss the SPAN initiative and ways of better engaging high-ability middle and high school students. She explained further that

the SPAN program used to be in the Honors Program but was moved and integrated into University College. The target population is home-schooled and other high-ability students. A continuing challenge is how to provide a “home” and support to these students on campus. Many of these students are still developing emotionally and do not integrate well into existing programs. Moreover, these students and their families have many special needs, but IUPUI still has much work to do to develop the necessary support programs. For these reason, the Honors College has made a decision to not automatically admit SPAN students into their program. They are, however, working on identifying alternatives as well as special strategies to respond to their special needs and integrate them more effectively into campus programs.

3. Please describe the structure and functioning of the IUPUI Honors College Advisory Committee. Dean Luzar noted that she embraced an early suggestion to establish an honors college faculty that is composed of faculty who are teaching honors college. Currently, they do not have the funds to reimburse faculty for their extra efforts (which was done in the past). The Honors College currently has two other advisory groups: the University College Advisor Committee and High Ability Recruiting Committee/Team. Dean Luzar indicated she would like to create a new group composed of faculty to serve as the formal Honors College Advisory Committee. She is considering asking the Deans to appoint individuals to the new committee. She indicated further that she is now more familiar with faculty and can also suggest potential committee members to the Deans, in part, because of their prior/current involvement in the honors program and college. The Committee felt this would be a good strategy and overall structure, but also recommended that a key consideration should be whether or not the school representatives can really serve as a liaison and/or ambassador to other faculty within their units. Dean Luzar committed to organizing this new advisory board this summer so it would be in place for the fall semester of 2011-2012. Chancellor Bantz has also recommended the formation of an external, community-member board, and she will be working closely with him in this effort.

Dean Luzar thanked the committee for their input and time and volunteered to come back in the fall to update us on further progress within the Honors College.

11:55-12:05. Discussion of Final Report on IUPUI Honors College. The Chair invited the committee to comment on Dean Luzar’s responses to the outstanding questions and share their overall thoughts regarding the current state of the Honors College. The Committee was unanimous in their views that Dean Luzar has done an excellent job in implementing the new Honors College. While universally impressed with the progress, the Committee members noted several areas where additional work is needed to expand both access to and the impact of the Honors College programs. The greatest challenge, voiced by members of the committee, lies in developing greater clarity and consistency in the definition of what constitutes “honors work” across schools and disciplines. The Chair indicated that he will prepare a formal written report summarizing what the committee learned as well as their conclusions to submit to the IFC Executive Committee. A draft of this report will be circulated prior to the committee members before the end of May.

12:05-12:10. Report from the Campus Undergraduate Admissions Committee.

Marquita Walker, the Committee's official representative to the Campus Undergraduate Admissions Committee, was unable to be present for the meeting due to her participation in a professional conference; however, she submitted the following written report for the committee which was shared with the members present and is provided below:

- Completing transfers without final transcripts for the current semester. At this time undergraduate admissions marks as incomplete applications from students who are not currently admissible and are waiting for final transcripts to see if they become admissible. This works well for fall if the student is enrolled in spring courses, but for (1) students intending to enter IUPUI in spring while they are still enrolled in fall coursework elsewhere (most universities cannot issue a transcript with final fall grades prior to Christmas) or (2) students intending to come to summer who are enrolled in spring classes or (3) students intending to enroll in fall who are enrolled in summer classes, there is simply not enough time for Undergraduate Admissions to receive the transcripts, evaluate them, and admit them in time for the students to go through Orientation. A decision was made to defer the final decision for these 3 groups for a semester so that the most recent semester could be evaluated.
- Admitting non-residents (NRS) who have the ACT but not writing. At this point in time, undergraduate admissions will not admit a student who does not have a writing portion of either the SAT or ACT. For most Hoosiers, this is not an issue because they take the SAT where the writing portion is required. However, in ACT states (most of our surrounding and feeder states for NRs), the writing portion is optional. As a result, otherwise admissible MR students are made incomplete until they retake the ACT or SAT and submit the writing score. Also several states pay for the ACT for all high school students and do not require them to take the writing portion of the ACT. Given that the writing portion is not used in the admission decision and strong students from out-of-state may not know about this requirement until after they have taken the ACT, it was determined that Undergraduate Admissions should have the ability to admit otherwise admissible NR students without the writing portion of the ACT.
- Admitting NRS who are not required by their home state to have Core 40 but who have very strong records. At this point in time, Undergraduate Admissions encounters students for other states who have completed all requirements except that the distribution of courses (usually social studies) does not meet the requirement of Core 40. Since these students are not educated in Indiana, they are not counseled to complete Core 40 yet they can be very strong students. Usually they are overcompensating in math or science instead of taking the required number of social science. Undergraduate Admissions will not admit students educated outside of Indiana as long as they have two instead of three years of social science and have an additional year of math, lab science or foreign language.
- Admitting students with early-college credit. Undergraduate Admissions will now review students who are completing college coursework while in high school using the freshman application standards and not those of transfer students regardless of the number of credits completed. This includes students who could be deferred to a community college even though they have completed the requirements to gain admission via the Partners Program.

12:10-12:30 Discussion of Campus-Wide Policy on the Number of Withdrawals. Josh Smith presented the findings from his study of peer institutions' policies regarding the number of withdrawals. The written report (distributed prior to the meeting) was prepared by Josh and several graduate research assistants at the Center for Urban and Multicultural Education (CUME). He reported that their review of the literature suggests that studies of the impact of withdrawals on academic success not clear cut and that only a minority of peer institutions have a campus wide policy similar to the one adopted by University College for all undergraduates. Following a robust discussion, the committee concluded that it should wait to see more data on the effectiveness of the University College policy and consider the issue again at the end of the next academic year. The committee felt that we would be able to make a more careful assessment once we have more information on the issues University College confronted after a second full year of implementation and after completing the committee's planned broader campus-wide review of policies surrounding withdrawal, forgiveness, and dismissal (see notes from the March meeting). The Chair thanked Josh and his students for compiling the data and indicated that we will invited Gayle Williams from University College to report back to the committee in the spring of 2012.

12:30-1:00. Discussion of the final report of the New Academic Directions Committee (Available at: <http://www.iu.edu/~newacad/docs/new-academic-directions-final-report.pdf>). The Chair invited committee members to discuss the final report of the New Academic Directions Committee. Overall, the Committee was intrigued by and supported many of the ideas contained in the report. Committee members, however, voiced a number of concerns and raised several important questions regarding the recommendations:

- 1) What does the establishment of a "health science campus" mean? What will the impact be on the IUPUI campus, particularly those units not directly involved in the health sciences?
- 2) While the focus on sustainability is laudable, there are many school and campus initiatives in this area. It is unclear how these would/could be coordinated in a single academic unit.
- 3) The area of Environmental Science cuts across many academic units. Of particular concern, however, is that the establishment of a new unit focused on "Environmental Science" could have negative implications for ongoing efforts to establish an accredited school of public health since environmental health science, a core public health discipline, is required for accreditation.
- 4) There is a recommendation to merge smaller units into larger units. The logic for these mergers, however, will vary by campus, and it is unclear how the University will the relative cost-effectiveness of unit mergers. Is administrative efficiency something that can only be achieved through mergers? Are there other strategies?
- 5) Overall tone is that faculty and staff should be prepared to "do more with less", but this general emphasis seems to advocate a centralized perspective that is inconsistent with responsibility centered management (RCM) which put this responsibility on the

individual academic units. Indeed, it is unclear how many of the administrative changes recommended would/could be implemented within an RCM environment.

While the Committee did not have serious concerns with the main concepts espoused in the report, the Committee unanimously agreed that there were not enough specific details on how specific recommendations would be implemented. More important, committee members noted that how any particular recommendation is implemented will be different depending on the campus. The issues facing each campus are different, because of their unique community connections and circumstances. Committee members also expressed concern that President McRobbie has asked the Deans to prioritize the recommendations for implementation because this gives the appearance that a decision to adopt has been made without careful consideration of input from the faculty has even been considered. The committee recommended unanimously that no part of the plan should be implemented until a detailed implementation plan (including alternatives) has been developed and carefully considered by the faculty. The committee also suggested that President McRobbie and his staff should articulate a clearer vision of how Indiana University should operate as “one university” while simultaneously acknowledging that each campus has critical local constituencies and circumstances.

1:00. Adjournment. The Chair thanked the committee members for their service to the university, particularly those members whose terms ended with this academic year. He adjourned the meeting and informed that committee members that the next meeting would be held in the fall.