

University of Illinois  
Urbana-Champaign Senate  
Final;Information

HE.02.08 Report on the Board of Higher Education Meeting, April 2, 2002.

The BHE met at Illinois State University. Chair Philip Rock called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m. The meeting marks the start of significant changes in the Board. Chair Philip Rock retired effective at the close of the meeting. Vice-Chair Jane Williamson resigned prior to the meeting moving to New York and given Executive Director Sanders' resignation as of May 31 it was his last meeting. Resolutions were adopted honoring the service of each individual and representatives of the five advisory committees all commented on the retirements in their reports. Daniel J. Lavista, Executive Director Designate, attended and will overlap the month of May with Dr. Sanders. Katie Cox, EIU, will join the Board as the student representative. The Board scheduled a short Executive Session at the conclusion of the meeting and then met with the members of the Student Advisory Group. The Board next meets June 4 on the UIUC campus.

Following a welcome by ISU President Victor Boschini, Jr., Director Sanders thanked ISU for hosting a March conference on the role of the community colleges in teaching training. This will lead to greatly enhanced cooperation between community colleges and four-year institutions in teacher training.

The first action was the unanimous adoption of *All Faculty Matter*, the BHE report on part-time and full-time nontenure track faculty. The draft report had been modified to include more testimony of individuals with complaints about their status, compensation, and working conditions. The conclusions of the survey that accompanied the report were defended as having a 95% level of confidence, an error margin of plus or minus five percent. Institutions were directed to formulate short and long-term plans to enhance the contribution of non-tenured faculty with the first report on plans and implementation due December 2002. An ISU faculty member and representatives of two organizations asked that the report be rejected. They stressed the growth in numbers and percentages of non-tenured faculty and the lack of academic freedom and other protections for non-tenured faculty.

A report on the process for approving private college programs and degrees evolved into a discussion of the fact that 15 to 20 private Illinois institutions are on a "financial watch" by a national agency. A suggestion that these schools be identified on the IBHE web site was rejected on the grounds that this could increase their financial difficulties. Given an expressed concern that the Board can give program approval to private institutions but not take it way, the staff responded that the Board can revoke degree granting and operating authority. (No mention was made whether it had ever done so.) The report addressed the issue of private institutions being required to meet the same standards of public institutions in terms of "need" for the program. Such a change was rejected on the grounds of difficulty of defining *need*, possible infringement on academic freedom and involving a legislative redefinition of "the policy purposes of Illinois' regulatory statutes." It was suggested that problems posed by Internet-based institutions need

federal rather than state action. The report argued that the standards for approving private college programs and degrees were strong and that opening the legislation for “housekeeping changes” could result in weakening the standards.

The Board ultimately endorsed a resolution supporting legislation to make the use of fake degrees from Illinois institutions for purposes such as gaining employment or admission to institutions a misdemeanor. Twenty Internet sites were listed as trafficking in fake degrees. Concerns were expressed that the legislation should not be limited to fake degrees from Illinois institutions, that institutions should be given protection from such activities, and that the crime was more than a misdemeanor. The sense was that this was a problem the Board was calling to the legislature’s attention and asking it be addressed.

The IBHE recommended allocations of the Governor’s budget were adopted. This included increases of \$24.2M to SURS, \$16.1M for the Illinois Student Assistance Program and \$3M to implement a teacher loan repayment program. The budget represents a 3.2% reduction for public universities from their original 2002 budget. Tuition increases may make up some of the reductions. The public universities will “contribute” \$45M out of their budgets to the Group Health Insurance Reserve Fund as was required this fiscal year. Budgets for community colleges were reduced 3.3% from the original 2002 appropriation levels but did not have to contribute to the Health Insurance Reserve Fund as their health insurance is not funded through Central Management Services. The first 11 and the 20<sup>th</sup> ranked projects on the Capital budget were funded as were 9 projects not part of the BHE recommendations. (The next item on the list would have been the Lincoln Hall remodeling at UIUC.) Board members expressed general alarm about the limited funds available but complimented the staff on doing its best under the circumstances.

The Context for FY 2004 Budget Development was adopted with the reservation that this might be changed depending on the results of the legislative session and changes in the economic outlook. The stress is upon achieving the goals of *The Illinois Commitment*. Institutions will need to reallocate as well as delay or not fully implement important programs and activities and be asked for a match to jointly support programs to improve salary competitiveness and deferred maintenance projects.

A “new, simplified process” for approving public institution programs was reviewed and a list of public and private institutions pending applications distributed. An update on the Illinois Century Network was given.

The Board approved a \$77.6M non-instructional project at UIUC for expansion and enhancement of student recreational facilities. This controversial item had been delayed from the February agenda and still evoked numerous questions and concerns. One outcome was a resolution for the staff to develop guidelines to be followed for future non-instructional projects presented for Board approval.

Ken Andersen, reporting for the Faculty Advisory Council, saluted those retiring from the Board and presented a resolution congratulating Dr. LaVista on his appointment as the next BHE Executive Director and calling for a continuation of the Council’s positive relationship with the

retiring director. He distributed a FAC report adopted February, 2001, previously shared with the Board, noting it addressed many concerns about the use of non-tenured faculty and that the FAC had not had time to respond to the draft nor the final report but would do so. He noted widely shared faculty concerns about the impact of budget recisions on student programs, classes offerings, and growth in class sizes. He stressed that the faculty had not been rebuilt in terms of numbers following the early 1990 reductions and noted the disconnect between efforts to improve salaries and limit the growth in non-tenure track faculty while simultaneously cutting budgets.

Student Representative Katie Cox urged that ensuring the quality and affordability of public institutions should be given top budget priority during cutbacks. The representative of the private for profit institutions stressed the value of continued competition for students and in programs.

The meting adjourned at 11:55 a.m. following the round of tributes by the Board to the retiring members and Director Sanders.

Ken Andersen, Chair, FAC to the BHE