

UNIVERSITY OF IOWA FACULTY SENATE

Minutes

Tuesday, 20 October 1998
Senate Chamber, Old Capitol

Members Present: J. Andrews, C. Berman, J. Bertolatus, A. Bhattacharjee, S. Bishara, F. Boos, J. Carlson, P. Chang, K. Clark, C. Colvin, J. Cox, R. Curto, D. Davis, A. Dipardo, G. El-Khoury, G. Fischer, J. Hoballah, R. Hohl, E. Irish, J. Jew, J. Kline, S. Lawrence, E. Link, C. Lynch, D. Manderscheid, K. Marra, J. Menninger, K. Mescher, G. Milavetz, G. Oden, M. Raymond, J. Ringen, C. Ringen, E. Rivera, D. Rosenthal, C. Roy, D. Stephens, M. Stone, K. Tachau, B. Thompson, J. Tomkovicz, M. Vargas, M. Wall, E. Wasserman, R. Weir, R. Wiley, R. Zbiek.

Members Absent (Excused): Z. Ballas, L. Burmeister, M. David, M. Grover-McKay, J. Hayes, P. Hitchon, D. Liddell, L. Marshall, V. Nair, M. Rizzo, W. Stanford.

Members Absent: J. Arora, M. Barrick, B. Butler, H. Diehl, B. Doebbeling, M. Emery, K. Ephgrave, T. Judge, D. Klemm, I. Levin, B. Levy, A. McCarthy, J. Moyers, M. Pincus, A. Roberts, S. Rynes-Weller, C. Stanford, D. Wakefield.

Guests: David Bills (Education), Lee Anna Clark (Office of the Provost), John Folkins (Office of the Provost), Mary Mathew Wilson (Faculty Senate Office), Trevor Maxwell (Press Citizen), Lyle Muller (Gazette), Jon Whitmore (Office of the Provost).

- I. The meeting was called to order at 3:34 PM by President Wiley.
- II. Approval of minutes: It was moved by Prof. Roy, seconded by Prof. Tachau, that the minutes of the meeting of the Faculty Senate of 22 September 1998 be approved. The motion passed without dissent.
- III. Announcements
 - A. On 23 October 1998, gubernatorial candidate Tom Vilsack will visit. He will be in the Senate Chamber of Old Capitol from 1:00-2:30 PM. Interested senators are encouraged to attend.
 - B. On 13 November 1998 the alumni association will sponsor an event for "community advocates." These individuals are intended to be available on short notice to interact with legislators about local concerns.
 - C. Mr. Foldesi of the Office of Vice President for Finance and University Services, in meeting with the Faculty Council, may have left a misimpression of the activities of the ombudsperson. It is not the case that during disputes the ombudsperson is an advocate for individual faculty/staff; rather the ombudsperson acts as a neutral facilitator. Further, the ombudsperson's office was mistakenly portrayed as formal in its activities; that's not so, they are very informal.
 - D. The annual bulb planting has been rescheduled to 25 October 1998, 1-4 pm, in Hubbard park.
- IV. There was a report made by President Wiley and Vice President Carlson on a questionnaire concerning Teaching and Service productivity. A draft of the questionnaire was previously considered by the Faculty Council, who made numerous suggestions. A final draft was distributed during the Senate meeting. Prof. Carlson is acting as the lead person on the design of the questionnaire. Senators were encouraged to

send their comments to him via campus mail or e-mail. Prof. Carlson stated that the goal is 100% participation by faculty. Senators' views should be sent soon, within one week if possible, since the goal is to gather the data this semester.

V. There was no Old Business to discuss.

VI. New Business

A. Committee Recommendations: Prof. Jew moved, seconded by Prof. Lawrence, to approve the following recommendations of the Committee on Committees:

1. Prof. Jean Jew (Anatomy) to replace Prof. Douglas Shasby (Internal Medicine) for the remainder of his 1998-99 term on the Budget Planning Committee.
2. Prof. Margaret Stratton (Art & Art History) to replace Prof. Thomas Charlton (Anthropology) for the remainder of his 1998-99 term on the University Lectures Committee.

B. Prof. David Bills, Chair of the Faculty Senate Committee on Honorary Degrees, introduced a report on honorary degrees, distributed earlier to Senators. He pointed out that the Committee did not take votes on the substantive issues, nor was he prepared to recommend on how they should be voted by Senators. Prof. Bills did state the Committee's view that if honorary degrees are to be awarded, there are four principles that should be adhered to: separation from financial issues, especially fund-raising; separation from political considerations; faculty control; and tangible contribution to the University's mission. There followed a spirited discussion on the merits of awarding honorary degrees in general and at the University of Iowa in particular. Among the points raised were:

The rate of honorary degree awards at other institutions is three-to-four per year.

A revised policy on honorary degrees would be implemented by an ad hoc committee of faculty.

There are good reasons to give honorary degrees for non-academic achievement: the example was given of an award to a South Korean businessman for devoting his life to human rights, including creating a noodle factory in North Korea.

The risks of watering down real degrees and the potential abuse of awarding honorary degrees for political or financial reasons.

The apparent insignificance of such risks, in the light of how many prestigious institutions have had this custom for centuries.

The necessity of rescinding the extant but moribund policy on honorary degrees.

The failure of previous Senate attempts to revivify the policy.

The desirability of providing students with role models who have followed non-conventional paths.

Prof. Andrews offered a substitute motion: "The Faculty Senate accepts the report of the Faculty Senate Committee on Honorary Degrees and confirms their recommendation that if the University has an honorary degree program, it should be conducted in accordance with the recommendations of that report, especially its four principles." The proposed substitute motion failed.

Prof. Rosenthal, seconded by Prof. Roy, offered a substitute motion: "The Faculty Senate accepts the report by the Faculty Senate Committee on Honorary Degrees." The motion to substitute passed without dissent. The main motion, having been replaced by this substitute, was then passed.

It was then moved "that if honorary degrees are approved, they should be governed by the four principles set out in the report of the Faculty Senate Committee on Honorary Degrees." The motion passed without dissent.

Prof. Kline moved, seconded by Prof. Weir, "to reconstitute the existing University practice of awarding honorary degrees, in accordance with the recommendations of the previously-accepted report." This motion failed: 18 voting in favor, 22 against.

VII. President Wiley declared the meeting adjourned at 4:46 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

John R. Menninger, Secretary