

USC Faculty Perspective on Shared Governance at the University of Illinois¹

September 26, 2006

Shared governance is what makes a good university great.

- The faculty of the university, as defined in the University of Illinois *Statutes*, is responsible for the teaching, research, and scholarly activities of the university. The faculty, therefore, has “inherent interests and rights in academic policy and governance.” The faculty shares in the governance of the university in all matters related to educational policy, broadly defined.
- The faculty governs the administration of each college or academic unit, through its bylaws. Those bylaws, established and amended by the faculty of that unit, determine the administrative organization and procedure of the unit, “including the composition and tenure of executive or advisory committees.”
- The faculty has a collegial, not adversarial, relationship with the administration. To understand the role faculty has in shared governance, one must understand the university’s structure and how it is governed.

UI Senates

Senates derive their authority from the *Statutes*, which allow each senate to exercise legislative functions in matters of educational policy that affect either the University as a whole or individual campuses. For each campus, the senate determines matters of educational policy, including requirements for admission, requirements for degrees and certificates, the academic calendar, and educational policy on student affairs. The senates function mostly through their committees: ad hoc committees, standing committees, and Executive Committees.

Among many important committees of the senate, one committee deserves special attention. The General University Policy Committee, as specified in the senate bylaws, studies and reports its recommendations to the senate on issues concerning general university policy in broad terms, including issues concerning not only this campus but also other campuses and the university as well.²

University Senates Conference

Statutes provide for a legislative body of the university, which is the University Senates Conference. The Senates Conference, which comprises 20 members elected by the three campus senates, reviews matters acted upon by each senate and proposes its own recommendations. The Conference assists senates to communicate with one another, with university and campus administrative officials, and with the Board of Trustees (through the president). The Conference helps to maintain harmonious relations and promotes agreement or consistency among the three senates. In addition to its other

¹ Based on three documents on shared governance, one by Lane Crothers, Chair of the Illinois State University Academic Senate, another prepared by Michael Grossman, “Faculty Participation in Shared Governance at UIUC,” August 22, 2005, and the third prepared by Pat Langley, “Powers and Responsibilities of Campus Senate and its Committees,” May 25, 2006.

² Recent issues for General University Policy Committee include the possibility of multi-year contracts for non-tenure-track academic staff, a review of university administrative structure, and a procedure to monitor the Campus Master Plan.

duties, the Conference advises the Board of Trustees, the president of the university, other administrative officials, and campus senates on matters of concern to the university.³

Board of Trustees and the University Administration

The Legislature of the State of Illinois created the University of Illinois by the University of Illinois Act (110 ILCS 305) and established the Board of Trustees by the University of Illinois Trustees Act (110 ILCS 310). The Board of Trustees is responsible to the people of Illinois.

The Board of Trustees has final authority over the university and exercises jurisdiction in all matters, except those matters it has delegated to the president or other officers of the university. The Board, in cooperation with the faculty, established a set of *Statutes* that provide a framework for governance of the university. Campus senates of the university or the Board may propose amendments to the *Statutes*, but the Board cannot amend the *Statutes* without consulting the senates. Notice that the requirement is for consultation, not approval of the senates.

In addition to the *Statutes*, the Board of Trustees adopted a set of regulations, *The General Rules Concerning University Organization and Procedure*, which deals with the administrative organization of the university. The Board may change *The General Rules* upon recommendation of the president and after consultation with the University Senates Conference.

The Board formulates university policies, but the administration executes those policies. In the administration of the university, the president is the chief executive officer. Other university officers include three vice presidents and three chancellors. The Board of Trustees is composed of thirteen members: nine appointed by the Governor; three students, one elected from each campus for a one-year term; and the Governor, *ex officio*. One student trustee, selected by the Governor, has an official vote.

Several standing committees help do the work of the Board. Of special interest to faculty is the Academic Affairs Committee. Through this committee, the Board communicates with campus senates and the University Senates Conference to ensure ongoing interaction with faculty governance groups.⁵ The chair of the Academic Affairs Committee, as well as the president, convey to the Board matters of interest to the faculty.

The AAUP, in its *1966 Statement on Government of Colleges and Universities*, recognizes the authority of the governing board and the administration. In addition, it points out that faculty, together with the administration, staff, and students, have important roles to

³ Recent issues for Senates Conference include faculty representation to the Board of Trustees, extension of benefits to same-sex and opposite-sex domestic partners, and Chief Illiniwek.

⁴ Two recently proposed amendments to the *Statutes* involve academic professionals. One provides optional multi-year contracts, and related dismissal procedures, for certain non-tenure-track academic staff not currently eligible for contracts longer than one year. Another clarifies employment policies of academic professionals who work at the level of University Administration, so the policies will be those of the campus at which their principal office is located.

⁵ In 2005, the chair of the Board proposed a process by which campus senates (through their observers to meetings of the Board) and Senates Conference (through its Executive Committee) meet with the chair and vice-chair of the Academic Affairs Committee to discuss items on the Board's agenda and other items that are of mutual interest to the faculty and the Board.

- establish policy and procedures for admission, content of courses and curricula, requirements for degrees and certificates, grades and grading, the academic calendar, and other matters pertaining to education;
- advise on changes in academic organization, such as the termination, separation, transfer, merger, change in status (e.g., department to school), or renaming of academic units;
- establish policy and procedures for promotion and tenure, dismissal, sabbatical leaves, and support of research;
- search for, and recommend appointments or nonreappointments of, faculty and administrators, including the dean, the chancellor, and the president;
- develop and advise on budgets and advise on allocation of resources for the department, the college, the campus, and the university;
- establish policy and procedures to set rates for tuition and fees;
- set long-term goals and develop strategic plans for the department, the college, the campus, and the university; and
- develop a master plan for buildings and other physical resources.

Summary

UI's strong tradition and history of shared governance, based in the *Statutes*, sets the institution apart from others and ensures its viability as a 21st century institution. The central importance of the faculty in campus and university governance is reflected in the *Statutes*. Both the Senates and the University Senates Conference represent the official voice of the faculty in campus matters, and therefore, have substantial authority in shaping policy across significant areas of the campuses and the university.

RESOURCES:

AAUP, 1966. Statement on government of colleges and universities. [www.aaup.org/statements/Redbook/Govern.htm]

Illinois Compiled Statutes: University of Illinois Act (110 ILCS 305) and University of Illinois Trustees Act (110 ILCS 310). [www.ilga.gov]

Spitze, R. G. F. and V. J. Stone, 1994. Faculty participation in university governance. UIUC Chapter of AAUP.

University of Illinois, 2002. *Statutes*. [www.uillinois.edu/trustees/statutes.html]

University of Illinois, 2003. Bylaws of the Board of Trustees [www.uillinois.edu/trustees/bylaws.html]

University of Illinois, 2004. *The General Rules Concerning University Organization and Procedure*. [www.uillinois.edu/trustees/rules.html]

University of Illinois, 2005. The Board of Trustees. [www.uillinois.edu/trustees/index.html]

APPENDIX A

THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS STATUTES

The UI Statutes solidify and allow the implementation of the principles of faculty governance. “As the responsible body in the teaching, research, and scholarly activities of the University, the faculty has inherent interests and rights in academic policy and governance.” (Article II, Section 3. b.). The Statutes distribute faculty authority and responsibility between the legislative authority of the Campus Senates on the one hand, and the College-School-Department on the other.

The Senate exercises “legislative functions in matters of educational policy affecting the University as a whole or its own campus only.” (Article II, Section 1. a.) For those matters not governed by the Campus Senate, the College (and Departments) shall have “jurisdiction in all educational matters falling within the scope of its programs, including the determination of its curricula” and “has the fullest measure of autonomy consistent with the maintenance of general university educational policy and correct academic and administrative relations with other divisions of the University.” (Article III, Section 2. c.)

THE CAMPUS SENATE

Educational Policy

Educational policy is defined broadly, “including but not limited to: requirements for admission to the several colleges, schools and other teaching divisions; general requirements for degrees and certificates; relations among colleges, schools and other teaching divisions; the academic calendar; and educational policy on student affairs.” (Article II, Section 1. c.) The Senate also recommends “candidates for honorary degrees,” and determines “...the manner in which the faculty shall recommend candidates for earned degrees, diplomas, and certificates to be conferred by the president under the authority of the Board of Trustees.” (Article II, Section 1. d.)

Student Affairs

The Campus Senates have substantial responsibility and authority over student affairs, including student discipline, and intercollegiate athletics. The “senates shall be responsible for the development of appropriate recommendations regarding policies on student affairs at their respective campuses. Each senate shall ensure the opportunity for substantial student involvement in the development of these recommendations.” (Article XI, Section 1. a.) Each Senate must “establish a committee or other body concerned with student discipline.” (Article XI, Section 2. a.) Because of its primary authority over educational policy, the Senate, through the Intercollegiate Athletics Committee, also exercises responsibility for the academic and educational policies that govern intercollegiate athletic programs.

Creation and Reorganization of Academic Units

For proposals to create new or to change existing academic units, including a campus, which must be approved by the BOT, the Senate must be consulted. For example, in any

reorganization of the College, “the president shall submit the proposal [for creation, modification, or elimination] ...together with the advice of the senate and chancellor and the University Senates Conference to the Board of Trustees for action.” (Article VIII, Section 1. c.)

For all other units “engaged in academic activities” which do not require BOT action, the Statutes require the administrator refer the matter to “to the executive committee of the campus senate for its information and advice prior to approval by the appropriate administrator.” (Article VIII, Section 3.)

Role in Appointment, Reappointment and Evaluation of Administrators

When the BOT appoints a new campus chancellor, “the president shall have the advice of a committee selected by the senate of the campus concerned.” This means the Senate appoints the advisory-search committee. (Article I, Section 5.)

The chancellor is required to seek the advice of the executive (steering) committee of the campus senate on the appointment and annual reappointment of vice-chancellors in academic affairs (Article III, Section 1.g.) and in student affairs (Article XI, Section 1).

Amending the Statutes

The Campus Senates and the Board of Trustees are the only two bodies which may propose amendments to the UI Statutes. If the BOT proposes statutory changes, the “board shall not finally adopt any such proposal without first seeking the advice of the president, the senates, and the University Senates Conference. Any proposal to amend the Statutes which is initiated by the Board of Trustees shall be transmitted through the president to the University Senates Conference and transmitted by the conference, with its recommendations, to the senates for consideration and advice.” (Article XIII, Section 8. b.)

Moreover, in addition to the UI Statutes, the faculty and the senates’ central role in campus and university governance is delineated in other documents including, the Campus Senate Constitutions and By-Laws, the Faculty Personnel Policies Handbook, and the AAUP Statement on Government of Colleges and Universities.

APPENDIX B

POWERS OF COMMITTEES OF THE CAMPUS SENATES

This statement on shared governance should make it clear that the Campus Senates have substantial authority which brings with it the ability and need to conduct serious, thoughtful analyses of the issues each campus faces. Accordingly, Senate committees should be aware that they have the authority and power to take many actions that will facilitate their work. The following list is not meant to be complete. It suggests the minimum powers and responsibilities shared by the standing committees of the Campus Senate. Committees should use these to help them fulfill their responsibilities

- To raise issues of concern within their field of responsibility, whether in response to a request from the Steering Committee, an internal committee, a University administrator, a University community member, or a committee's particular interest;
- Through their own initiative, to gather and collect information relevant to an issue;
- To request University administrative staff collect and present information relevant to an issue;
- To request information, whether in person or in writing, from anyone who might provide valuable insights into the issue under study;
- To formulate draft plans and policies that they then solicit commentary about;
- To accept or reject ideas and plans referred to them by the Steering Committee or other sources;
- To oversee the operations of the external committees, if any, that report to the committee. Such oversight includes the authority to make sure the external committee is following appropriate University rules and regulations as it undertakes its operations in the name of the internal committee;
- To expect timely responses to requests for information;
- To have access to appropriate means of communicating and promulgating their plans, policies, and requests for information to the University community;
- To expect that the recommendations they make, if adopted by the Campus Senate, will be carried out by the University administration;
- To form subcommittees to further their work, subject to the requirements of the Illinois Open Meetings Act;
- To hold supplemental meetings if necessary to facilitate their work;
- To contact the Chair of the Campus Senate to enforce their prerogatives and answer their concerns;
- To contact appropriate University administrators or the Chair of the Campus Senate if they have encountered difficulties, such as unresponsive staff persons or scheduling conflicts, in carrying out their responsibilities;
- To take appropriate time to understand the issues which come before them.

APPENDIX C

THE AAUP STATEMENT ON GOVERNMENT OF COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

Jointly promulgated by the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), the American Council on Education (ACE), and the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges (AGB), the statement notes the “variety and complexity of the tasks performed by institutions of higher education” which “produce an inescapable interdependence among governing board, administration, faculty, students, and others. The relationship calls for adequate communication among these components, and full opportunity for appropriate joint planning and effort.” Section II. A.

- While fully acknowledging that the Board is the “final institutional authority,” it delineates the central decision-making role of faculty in the academic community. According to Article V. of the Statement, the faculty:
- “has primary responsibility for such fundamental areas as curriculum, subject matter and methods of instruction, research, faculty status, and those aspects of student life which relate to the educational process.” Specifics include establishing policy and procedures for admission, content of courses and curricula, requirements for degrees and certificates, grades and grading, the academic calendar, and other matters pertaining to education.
- “sets the requirements for the degrees offered, determines when the requirements have been met, and authorizes the president and board to grant the degrees thus achieved.”
- is “primarily responsible” for matters of “faculty status including appointments, reappointments, decisions not to reappoint, promotions, the granting of tenure, and dismissal,” as well awards like sabbaticals. This is based on the centrality of the faculty’s role in determining educational policy. “Determinations in these matters should first be by faculty action through established procedures, reviewed by the chief academic officers with the concurrence of the board. The governing board and president should, on questions of faculty status, as in other matters where the faculty has primary responsibility, concur with the faculty judgment except in rare instances and for compelling reasons which should be stated in detail.”

According to Article II.C., responsibilities the faculty share with the Board and/or the President (or campus chancellors) include:

- The “framing and execution of long-range plans,” including strategic plans at every level.
- Basic decision making “regarding buildings and other facilities to be used in the educational work of the institution.”
- Budgeting: “The allocation of resources among competing demands is central in the formal responsibility of the governing board, in the administrative authority of the president, and in the educational function of the faculty.” This includes advise on tuition and fees and salary increases.
- Selection of the “chief administrative officer” and recommendations on the appointment and reappointment of deans, other major administrators, and chief academic officers.