

Survey Response: AP Representation on Campus Senate

Sent to AP via email July 20, 2015

I really appreciated the comments that were made by our AP's who filled out the APAC survey late this Spring. One of the concerns shared by an AP was about the flow of information coming out from the Campus Senate Representative about University business that may apply to APs. It inspired me to consider ways that I could provide more transparency on the actions of our Campus Senate and the consequences or benefits for our Academic Professionals. Before I share my thoughts on what could be done, I'd like to share an overview of the Campus Senate as it applies to the operations of UIS.

The Campus Senate rarely discusses subjects that apply directly to APs. Most of their business is centered around approval of language revisions to faculty policies or university statutes (such as this year on Academic Freedom), approval of resolutions affirming the role of faculty in shared university governance or development of new faculty-centered committees.

For a sample of the subjects covered by the senate, please check http://www.uis.edu/campussenate/docs/resolutions/AY2010_AY2020/#twentyfourteenfifteen

On many of these occasions, I have stayed quiet, since I did not believe that APs would be affected by senate actions. Since the Campus Senate is overwhelmingly staffed with faculty (and said members of the executive committee determine the agendas for each meeting) it is not a surprise that this is the case.

To review the membership of the Campus Senate, please check out <http://www.uis.edu/campussenate/members/senate/>

This is not to say that there have not been some very substantive subjects covered which, I believe, do affect the Academic Professionals of this campus.

- A. New Academic Majors/Minors and Concentrations – Since this university's enrollment is important to its overall standing, new majors are important. New majors could also mean new AP hires and changes to selected AP duties. I have always been supportive of new majors/minors, though I have (at times) merely sought more explanation of the degree plan for the average student. In addition, if our APs participated in the polls/surveys taken by the Provost a couple years ago, then it is a subject matter that should constantly draw attention from all facets of the university that put in their 2 cents.
- B. Committee Presentations – Since AP representatives serve on many of our UIS committees (such as Sustainability, Intercollegiate Athletics, Personnel

Policies, etc.) it is important for me to pay attention to any actions that could (for purpose of better understanding) reflect (positively or negatively) upon those who appointed them to said committees. While some committees (such as personnel policies) may not cover anything directly applicable to the AP, the effect of some decisions could affect an academic department that employs an AP.

- C. Academic Integrity Policy/Student Memberships or voting status on Committees – This is a concern for our APs because so many of our Academic Professionals work directly with students in Student Life. When changes are made in the manner in which a student is disciplined in relationship to a possible violation of academic integrity rules, it is important to make sure our students are informed; APs play a role in this. When our students' voice on campus committees are threatened through resolutions to take away their vote or their membership outright from that committee, it matters. As long as this university embraces the concept of "Leadership Lived", it would be important (at least to our APs in Student Life) that nothing on this campus is contradictory to this theme.
- D. *SUCSS* Business – The State Universities Civil Service System has been waging a long campaign to integrate as many AP positions into their University Civil Service collective by re-classifying Academic Professional positions. APAC or CAP (as it is also called on other campuses) has been challenging the practices of those who are auditing the targeted AP positions and has been doing its best to keep all APs apprised of this ongoing story. Our Campus Senate has been inserting itself on a few occasions to understand the process that is taking place and also to show support through endorsement of a recent Council of Illinois State Universities statement of concern. In all such cases Academic Professional Committees on all three campuses have been a driving force in keeping this subject from being ignored and I've done my best to voice concerns to the Campus Senate.
- E. Approval of Academic Calendar – As the calendar goes, so goes the planning of APs in academic departments. As the calendar goes, so goes the prepping and planning for those APs in student affairs, student activities, residential life, and more in order to construct an environment and schedule that will make for a more attractive student experience. I did agree with the Campus Senate decision to eliminate the Thanksgiving week break in the interest to make the finals week earlier and thereby allowing for an earlier time for grades to be posted and any (mostly graduate and online) program admissions decisions to be attended to, while allowing for possible extra time free in between semesters.

The above is just a sample of relevant topics that were covered in our Campus Senate.

I would like to encourage my fellow Academic Professionals to join me in developing a more informed overall AP membership.

Be involved, even if it only means attending our monthly APAC meetings or just attending the annual AP assembly to hear news and thoughts from our Chancellor and Provost. Consider being a part of the university committees that include AP representatives. Consider running for a seat on APAC when the elections come around each Spring. Every new voice brings a new perspective.

- APAC Meetings take place on the second Thursday of every Month (beginning at 9am at Brookens Library)
- The APAC website has some very useful information in it, it never hurts to check it every other week or so - <http://www.uis.edu/apac/> - this site also keeps minutes of all APAC meetings
- The Campus Senate usually announces its agenda for the next meeting the Tuesday of the next Meeting - <http://www.uis.edu/campussenate/> , the Campus Senate is open to the public and meets on Fridays at 10am every two weeks. (a brief personal note, I've gained an appreciation of many of our Faculty representatives in these meetings. The conversations and debate that arises can be very intriguing and (on a few occasions) *entertaining*. We don't always have to agree with someone, but it sure helps to understand where they are coming from.)

I promise the following two steps to be a better servant to all APs as the Campus Senate Rep.

- My office door is open for anyone who wants to ask questions (or share their opinions or suggestions) on upcoming or recent Campus Senate business. I'm in UHB 1044.
- I will try to put together brief overviews of each Campus Senate within a week of the meetings, making special mention of any actions taken that have even a thread of effect upon our APs. Those overviews will be posted on the APAC site.

If there is anything else that any AP believes that I could do to better communicate their opinions and concerns, please do not hesitate to email me.

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