

February 10, 2000

Dr. Rodger Tarr

Chairperson, President's Committee on Governance

Dear Dr. Tarr:

What follows is the response you requested of the Administrative/Professional Staff Council regarding the shared governance proposals recently presented to the campus community. More specifically and in keeping with your request we have provided responses first to the philosophical framework and general principles of shared governance and second to the proposed model of shared governance. It is our sincere hope that these reactions, responses and alternative proposals will further the important goals which underpin the work of the Committee on Shared Governance.

As to the philosophical framework and general principles of shared governance as articulated in the "Report of the Task Force on Internal Governance"

We are in strong support of the principles of shared governance as articulated in "Report of the Task Force on Internal Governance." We are particularly pleased to see a proposal for shared governance that so clearly values the inclusion of all University stakeholders. For too many years, some groups have been precluded from meaningful participation in matters which effect them and about which they have special knowledge.

We are highly supportive of the principle that discussions, input, recommendations, and decision-making should always begin at the local level and that those actively encouraged to participate *include all* who meet the criteria stated in the Committee's presentations to the university community:

- Decisions have direct consequences for the members of a particular group of stakeholders
- Decisions have direct consequences for the central "mission" or "role" of a particular stakeholder group
- Decisions fall within the special expertise of a particular stakeholder group
- Stakeholder group possesses special knowledge and experience [Presentation to the University, President's Committee on Governance]

We strongly support the idea that shared governance does not routinely include the remaking of decisions. More specifically, we hope that once the time-period allotted for open-discussion has passed and input, recommendations and/or decisions submitted, they will stand and not be opened-up at another level, to be reconsidered or "approved," without there being a compelling reason to do so. We do not believe that subjecting each group's recommendations and/or decisions to the next "higher" group's concordance or vote has proved to be a fair or effective form of governance at Illinois State.

We concur with the Committee's assertion that an effective balance must be struck between broad involvement in discussions and/or decision-making and timely decision-making. We are willing however, to struggle with this particular challenge since the goal is to insure meaningful and timely input into discussions, information gathering and/or decision-making.

As to the proposed model of shared governance as articulated in the "Report of the Task Force on Internal Governance"

We are in strong support of a structural model that designates common roles and responsibilities for all Senates regarding the provision of input into the formation of policies, development of direction, *etc.* on University-wide issues.

We urge the Committee to insure that the language used to describe general and overlapping Senate functions and responsibilities be written in language that is parallel in each designation of Senate functions, so as not to suggest differing value or importance between Senates.

We strongly support the inclusion of Senate-specific authority and responsibilities in the description of each Senate. Such statements would allow each Senate to function more independently in areas in which their responsibilities are clear.

Additionally, we strongly affirm the model's designation of direct lines of communication among all groups including the University President and Board of Trustees.

We affirm the value both explicit and implicit in the model of open, free and frequent communication among the various Senates. The emphasis placed on communication, timely notification, open discussion of differences, and on the value of resolving different points of view is central to assuring shared governance, as is so firmly asserted in the "Report of the Task Force on Internal Governance."

Of most concern to the Council are two issues: the make-up of the proposed University Council and what we perceive as the lack of clarity regarding its roles and responsibilities. Of all the comments, questions and concerns expressed by A/P staff, these two issues have evoked the most negative and/or guarded responses to the work of the Committee.

Our foremost concern and the one we believe *must be addressed*, relates to our fundamental and philosophical objection to the proposed membership structure of the University Council. As proposed, at least 55% of the non-ex-officio members would be faculty, with the potential for this percentage to go as high as 63% should both A/P seats be occupied by those who hold faculty rank. At the same time the Civil Service and A/P representation is limited to no more than 9% each. These few A/P and Civil Service representatives would have to represent a very large and diverse group of constituents, far more varied than would be the case for other members of the University Council. We do

not view the proposed membership of the University Council as capable of meeting one of its foremost responsibilities: "...to speak and to act for the University Community..." ["Report of the Task Force on Internal Governance", May 3, 1999, p.25]

We are convinced that the role that should be assumed by members of the University Council is to be "University citizens" rather than to represent a constituent group in terms of voting power. Therefore, we propose that the University Council be composed of equal membership from the constituent groups, with four members seated per group, one of whom would be the Chairperson of that group's Senate. Further, we propose that the Chairperson of the University Council be a tenured faculty member. Thus, the proposal suggests a membership of seventeen (17), with each individual acting as a "University citizen" and not as a partisan for a constituent group.

It is our contention that such a membership composition better reflects the egalitarian philosophy so clearly expressed in the "Report of the Select Committee on Governance" and would further the likelihood that this central coordinating body would transcend the parochial issues of Senates and encourage a "good and sage, citizen of the University" approach to those important tasks and responsibilities assigned them. As the proposal is now written, University Council membership reinforces and recapitulates divisive elements of territoriality and commitment to one's group so evident in our current method of governance. Further, we believe that a smaller group would more likely develop a sense of common understanding and purpose.

In keeping with the previous suggestion, we recommend finding a different name for the University Council. A name, such as the University Citizen's Council, or some other such designation might reinforce the broad view that we hope would be taken by this group as it works to insure "reciprocal communication and mutual accountability" among Senates ["Report of the Select Committee on Governance", p. 2]; "*active participation* by the stakeholders at the appropriate, local level" ["Report of the Select Committee on Governance", p. 8]; resolution of differences; mediation and the other important principles of the shared governance articulated in the "Report of the Select Committee on Governance."

Continuing on the issue of University Council membership, we see the value of including those designated to serve as *ex officio*, non-voting members. Given their various roles and responsibilities within the University, such members would help to facilitate the coordination and communication functions that are deemed central to the University Council's role in governance. However, given that the proposal would have the Director of Athletics sitting as an *ex officio*, non-voting member, we *do not* concur with the Committee's proposal to reserve or designate an additional seat for the Chair of the Athletic Council.

We urge the Committee to make clear and certain in the final proposal, that the fundamental task of the University Council is to be a central coordinating body which would facilitate the collaborative work of the Senates, help insure local involvement in decision-making by appropriate stakeholders, and facilitate the work of the so-called,

resolution committees. Make it clear and unequivocal that this *is not the final decision-making body*, nor should it be viewed as the sole group that speaks for the campus community.

Finally, we thank the members of this and of the other governance committees for their excellent work. We sincerely appreciate their commitment to Illinois State and to the goal of improving governance at the University that is so clearly reflected in the documents presented to the campus community. We can only hope that these prodigious efforts over the last two years will bear fruit in the coming years.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Administrative/Professional Staff Council,

Michael C. Baum
President, Administrative/Professional Staff Council