

2009 Report from the Teaching Academy Taskforce

Our task force has had several excellent meetings at which we explored the different aspects of our charge. They were wide ranging discussions that brought in the perspectives of all members. At our last meeting we reviewed all of our discussions and took a formal vote on whether we want to go forward. Going forward means making a positive recommendation and producing the necessary documents for the Senate to consider and act on. The vote was unanimous for going ahead. We also agreed on a four person drafting committee that will prepare formal documentation (a recommendation statement, a policy statement/ charter, and an explanation in support of our recommendation). The writing group consists of myself, Charles Shrader, Steve Freeman, and Holly Bender.

I proceeded carefully with this discussion. It would have been very easy to have the meetings degenerate into general discussions ("teaching is good"). Each meeting we discussed one particular question about the proposal. Below is the list of questions. Given the nature of the proposal I think that we have made good progress and hope to have documents ready in the Fall. While all support the general consensus, there are a great many details that will have to be decided during the writing process.

Submitted by Jack Girton, Chair Teaching Academy Task Force

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Interoffice Communication

*Department of Sociology
107 East Hall*

Date: April 27, 2009

To: Clark Ford, President
Faculty Senate

From: Bill Woodman, University of Professor of Sociology

Subject: University Club Exploration

I write to say that this activity this year resembled nothing so much as an attempt to capture clouds in a bottle, as the terrain in which the initial question was asked changed so drastically that at some point it became unclear why the question was being asked. To reiterate the obvious, the economy began to melt down last fall at about the time I was beginning to ask the question about the utility, feasibility and possible models of such a facility.

We met as a group and I indicated that I needed to gather a good deal of current information on the topic before we could proceed, little realizing that the ground was beginning to shift under our feet. I reached out to some old contacts I had had from a decade ago and some of them were still running clubs. Each said that clubs can be viable but that there is no room for faculty making policies in a non-business-like way ("foodies" who get control of some clubs run them into the ground as happened at Penn State) nor for poor or poorly-run operations.

I contacted the president of the U.S. association of faculty and university clubs (LeAnn Peppers who runs the club at the University of Toronto) and got the lay of the land. She also sent me to Alicia Bogart at the University of Texas Campus Club which is in a recently constructed conference center named after AT&T (a major donor). As the person who has most recently built a club she had many insights and suggested that I contact the two most likely corporate out-sourcing partners: Aramark and Compas Flick (with whom ISU has contracts according to Warren Madden whom I also talked to about the idea). The contacts with the two corporate entities were where things went essentially dead. Beyond discussing the idea, neither would offer any firm outlines or time lines for how we should proceed, although one must remember that this was at the precise point at which the credit system had essentially derailed in the U.S.. If that were not enough discouragement at that point the ripples began to affect the State of Iowa and the first discussions of cut-backs and reversions occurred. As the bailouts and flat credit market

began to take hold I found neither wanting to even discuss the idea and I have no notion as to when this might change.

In sum, I still think that there is a role for such an entity on campus and a way to partner with a large donor which would find it efficacious to have their name attached to such a facility (*i.e.* John Deere, Pioneer, Principal, etc.), but nothing is likely to happen until the current global recession turns around and I would recommend that the discussion be put on the back burner until that happens.

Faculty Senate Promotion and Tenure Task Force
By Steve Freeman

The Faculty Senate Promotion and Tenure Task Force continued to work on addressing concerns regarding ISU promotion and tenure policies. This year we were able to right policy revisions regarding the solicitation of external reviewers and the content of external review letters that were supported by the administration and passed by the Senate. The work of the task force is not completed and we will start working on additional topics of interest in the fall.