March 19, 2010

ISU Faculty, Staff, and Students

Dear Colleagues,

I am writing with my weekly update on matters affecting Academic Affairs.

The reorganization plan is continuing to evolve. As you know from recent letters, we have long ago moved away from schools and school directors in science and engineering and in arts and letters, and we are talking instead about associate deans. We also clarified the role of the department chair, making clear that chairs would still have control over their local and operational accounts, and would still play the key role in tenure and promotion decisions, annual evaluations of faculty, and class scheduling. This was always the case.

On Wednesday, I had a very positive and productive meeting with the department chairs in the arts and letters. We discussed a number of topics, but the principal concern was with the role and composition of the college executive committee. We had a fruitful discussion about how we might constitute the committee given the uniqueness of this college, and I gained some valuable insight. I asked the chairs to think further about committee membership and to send me their thoughts about it. I want to thank each of them for spending time to discuss their views.

I would also like to thank all of you who are continuing to provide constructive suggestions concerning campus reorganization and other issues. I appreciate your commitment to continuing this important dialogue.

We will be closer to certainty about our fiscal situation after April 5th. That’s when the State Board of Education meets to decide about tuition rates. ISU has requested a 9.9% increase. The closer we get to that rate, the less pressure there will be on other parts of the budget. I will keep you posted.

Finally, President Vailas requires that each vice president annually prepare a list of key accomplishments of their division. The Academic Affairs list of selected accomplishments is posted on the website at http://www.isu.edu/acadaff/accomplishments.shtml I invite you to visit the site.

As usual, I will continue to give you periodic updates on Academic Affairs issues as news becomes available. I wish you a relaxing and rejuvenating Spring Break.

Cordially,

Gary A. Olson
Provost and Professor

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