

University of Rhode Island

DigitalCommons@URI

Faculty Senate Bills

Faculty Senate

5-13-1993

Annual Report of the Faculty Senate Student Rights and Responsibilities Committee

University of Rhode Island Faculty Senate

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.uri.edu/facsen_bills

Recommended Citation

University of Rhode Island Faculty Senate, "Annual Report of the Faculty Senate Student Rights and Responsibilities Committee" (1993). *Faculty Senate Bills*. Paper 1352.

https://digitalcommons.uri.edu/facsen_bills/1352

This Legislation is brought to you by the University of Rhode Island. It has been accepted for inclusion in Faculty Senate Bills by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@URI. For more information, please contact digitalcommons-group@uri.edu. For permission to reuse copyrighted content, contact the author directly.

UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND
Kingston, Rhode Island
FACULTY SENATE
BILL

Adopted by the Faculty Senate

TO: President Robert L. Carothers

FROM: Chairperson of the Faculty Senate

1. The attached BILL, titled Annual Report of the Faculty Senate
Student Rights and Responsibilities Committee,
is forwarded for your consideration.
2. The original and two copies for your use are included.
3. This BILL was adopted by vote of the Faculty Senate on May 13, 1993.
(date)
4. After considering this bill, will you please indicate your approval or disapproval. Return the original or forward it to the Board of Governors, completing the appropriate endorsement below.
5. In accordance with Section 10, paragraph 4 of the Senate's By-Laws, this bill will become effective June 3, 1993, three weeks after Senate approval, unless: (1) specific dates for implementation are written into the bill; (2) you return it disapproved; (3) you forward it to the Board of Governors for their approval; or (4) the University Faculty petitions for a referendum. If the bill is forwarded to the Board of Governors, it will not become effective until approved by the Board.

May 14, 1993
(date)

Leonard M. Kahn
Leonard M. Kahn
Chairperson of the Faculty Senate

ENDORSEMENT

TO: Chairperson of the Faculty Senate

FROM: President of the University

Returned.

- a. Approved .
- b. Approved subject to final approval by Board of Governors _____.
- c. Disapproved _____.

5/19/93
(date)

Robert L. Carothers
President

UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND
Kingston, Rhode Island

Faculty Senate Student Rights and Responsibilities Committee
Report for 1992-93

Introduction:

This committee's charge (UNIVERSITY MANUAL, 4.35-4.37) involves periodic review of the policies and operations of the student judicial system and the Student Handbook. The committee works in cooperation with the Director of the Office of Student Life (OSL), who serves as an ex officio member of the committee. During the current academic year, the committee considered several requests from the Office of Student Life, and recommendations regarding those requests are presented below.

Recommendations:

PART A

Recommendations Which Do Not Require Action By the Faculty Senate:

1. Change in section 39.7 of the Student Handbook.

Current: The accused and the accuser and/or his or her advisor shall have the right to cross-examine all witnesses and to view and question all evidence presented to the Judicial Board during the hearing. Written testimony from absentee witnesses may be received for consideration only upon mutual consent of the Board, the accuser, and the accused. Proof of the authorship but not content of such testimony must be made by certification by a notary public.

Recommended: The accused and the accuser and/or his or her advisor shall have the right to cross-examine all witnesses and to view and question all evidence presented to the Judicial Board during the hearing. Written testimony from absentee witnesses must have authorship verified by certification by a notary public and requires prior approval before presentation to the Judicial Board. Prior approval must be sought at least 48 hours in advance of the hearing whenever possible. Approval is determined by the Board's advisor after both accused and accuser and their advisors have an opportunity to examine the testimony and give the advisor their opinions about admitting it for the Board's consideration.

Rationale: This section as it is currently written allows the Board access to testimony which may be invalid or irrelevant and which may inappropriately prejudice their decision.

2. Reductions in the budget of the Office of Student Life have made maintenance of records of Judicial Board hearings difficult. As a consequence, a new policy establishing an administrative fee to be charged to students responsible for violations of community standards has been approved by the Assistant Vice President and the Vice President for Student Development and will be printed in the new Student Handbook and be implemented in September, 1993. The Faculty and Student Senate Executive Committees have been informed of this new policy.

The Student Rights and Responsibilities Committee discussed this policy and wholeheartedly endorsed it.

The Committee felt that an important part of educating students to become mature and responsible adults, is to make them aware that their actions have consequences. It is also unfair to charge the administrative costs of the judicial system to the rest of the student body.

3. In meetings with University officials during the Fall of 1991, the Town of Narragansett requested that the University expand its jurisdiction over students' off-campus conduct as described in the Student Manual (section 33.1) to include complaints by local residents. This issue was passed on to the current committee for discussion and recommendation.

Recommendation: After lengthy discussion, the committee arrived at a consensus that the University could and should not extend jurisdiction beyond that outlined in section 33.1. The committee also recommends that every effort be made to preserve cooperative and cordial relations with local communities, and to increase efforts to educate students in the importance of adherence of community standards of behavior, and to keep local communities informed of those efforts.

Rationale: The committee felt strongly that the University could not assume the task of policing off-campus student housing. As a public relations issue however, it is not in the best interests of the university to be perceived as an "Animal House" by local communities. The committee found no simple solutions to this problem.

4. At the request of the Office of Student Life a significant amount of time was devoted to discussions regarding academic integrity issues. The stimulus for this request was a copy of the results of a survey entitled "Academic Honesty at Babson College". The survey was not intended to assess the extent of academic honesty at Babson College, but rather to determine and compare perceptions of academic dishonesty held by the faculty and student body. The survey was also intended to determine whether a strict disciplinary system or an honor code would be a more effective vehicle in the control of academic dishonesty. The results were not surprising, and we expect would not be different at other institutions. They were:

"...there are different perceptions concerning academic dishonesty between students and faculty; a stricter disciplinary system would be more effective than an honor code at Babson; students see others cheating more often than do faculty members, and finally; there is no significant difference regarding the attitudes and rates of cheating among class level or gender."

The committee was provided with very unsettling anecdotal information regarding cheating on the URI campus:

1. Cheating is pervasive and organized.
2. Some faculty offices, especially in Chafee, are routinely broken into and exams stolen.

3. Faculty prefer to remain ignorant of the problem.

The committee agreed on a number of short term goals to address the issue of cheating on campus.

1. Raise the awareness of the faculty of the extent of cheating on campus.
2. Clarify the definitions of cheating for faculty and students.
3. Unify the perceptions of the faculty and students concerning the importance of academic dishonesty.
4. Establish university-wide standard procedures and penalties in cases of academic dishonesty .

Recommendations:

1. The committee recommends that the university adopt a standard report form for cases of academic integrity. (The committee suggests that the form currently used by the college of Arts and Sciences be used as a model.)
2. The committee recommends that the faculty be encouraged to adopt procedures conducive to academic integrity in their classes. (In light of the effect of budget cuts on class size, it is expected that opportunity for students to cheat will increase.)
3. The committee encourages faculty to place statements of their expectations of student behavior with regard to academic integrity in their course syllabi, with reference to Section 5 of the Student Handbook, "Policy on Cheating and Plagiarism".
4. The committee strongly supports efforts currently underway to engender a sense of community early in the academic experiences of first year students. The establishment of a freshman seminar program and expansion of the summer orientation program are steps in the right direction.

PART B

Recommendation Which Requires Action By the Faculty Senate:

1. Revision of UNIVERSITY MANUAL, section 9.21.10, beginning at line 7. The recommended change involves the description of hearing procedures, case summaries and terminology.

Current: ...(student) will be provided with a copy of the complete statement of Judicial Board procedures and a two year summary of previous cases, classified by violation, that have come before the Board. The student may admit guilty...or pleaded either innocent or guilty...shall be deemed to have pleaded not guilty.

Recommended: ...(student) will be provided with a copy of the complete statement of Judicial Board procedures. A summary of previous judicial cases will be made available on request to the Office of Student Life. The student may admit responsibility...or admit or deny responsibility...shall be deemed to have denied responsibility...

Rationale: Each academic year, there are approximately 900 completed judicial cases. Volume and expense prohibit this kind of classification and distribution.

The additional intention is to help make the judicial system less legalistic, less confrontational and more educational in tone by changing the terms guilty/not guilty to responsible/not responsible.

Members of the Committee:

J. Whitney Bancroft, RDE
Deborah Barton, OSL
Clair J. Cheer, CHM (Chair)
Fran Cohen, OSL (ex officio)
Wade Cordy, undergraduate student
James F. Findlay, HIS
Dana O. Shugar, ENG
Lanny O. Soderberg, EDC
Suzanne Sullivan, graduate student, HCF