

To: University Faculty Council
From: Educational Policies Committee
Date: November 27, 1995
Subject: Strategic Directions Charter

The members of the UFC.EPC discussed the Strategic Directions Charter and present below some of our responses and recommendations.

1. Each IU campus has the right to determine whether it wishes to adopt -new degrees or programs, e.g. the "university-wide" Associate Degree discussed within the document. Since other forms of Associate Degrees already exist on many campuses, and since resources are not unlimited, each campus has the right and responsibility to determine if the proposed degree, for which little rationale was provided within the document, falls within the mission and interests of that campus. If the campus decides to develop and offer such a degree, then the requirements for the degree should be established through normal faculty governance procedures at that campus.

Moreover, we are concerned that the inclusion of the newly proposed Associate Degree in the Strategic Directions Charter might indicate that university administrators intend for us to assume a new "community college" role in Indiana. If this is indeed the case, then traditions of faculty governance would dictate that we first engage in careful, thoughtful and open discussions--bringing together faculty, students, staff and administrators--regarding the many missions of Indiana University and how we can best serve our constituencies, in particular during times of limited resources.

2. Since the IU campuses have different missions, our classes, curricula, programs and graduation requirements can also differ. It is the right and the responsibility of each campus and each academic unit to establish and maintain their own requirements, and this autonomy must not be compromised. While different courses and graduation requirements may affect whether a student's courses on one campus will transfer with credit toward the major or toward graduation on another campus, the approval or denial of transferability must not be viewed as capricious roadblocks placed in the path of the student. Rather, they represent the results of careful and thoughtful faculty discussion on all campuses to determine how best to assist students in their academic endeavors, and to ensure that students are sufficiently prepared at each step to take the next step in their course work.
3. Each campus should ensure that their registration materials, such as the Schedule of Classes, clearly indicate that different IU campuses may have different requirements for the major and for graduation. Students who are considering transfer to another IU campus should be advised to apprise themselves of the requirements on both campuses.
4. Students, staff and faculty should have ready access to detailed information concerning the transferability of courses among the IU campuses. Such information is essential for responsible advising and registration, and will help to avoid misunderstandings and incorrect assumptions which have resulted from an absence of timely and correct information. Our perusal of the Indiana University World Wide Web pages, established by the IU Office of Admissions, revealed copious information under the advertised "standards for freshman admission" and nothing under the advertised "standards for transfer admission."

We recognize that inter-campus transfers are not handled by the Office of Admissions, but rather by the Recorder of the individual IU school or college in which the student requesting transfer is enrolled.

However, we believe that the importance of transferability information transcends individual academic units, and must be readily available to all. We therefore recommend that detailed information about transferability among IU campuses be included and regularly maintained on the Web. This should include general information about procedures and policies, as well as specific and complete information about the transferability of individual courses on each campus. For example, a student should be able to determine from the Web whether the courses he is enrolled in as an English major on one campus would count towards graduation credit or towards credit as an English major on another IU campus.

5. The UFC.EPC is adamantly opposed to any tuition philosophy which is based on whether the courses are lower division or upper division. Such differential tuition pricing presents enormous educational disadvantages and is contrary to our mission as a public educational institution. We should never be in a position where we provide economic incentives to students who take lower-level courses, and where we clearly discourage students from taking upper-level courses.

6. The Strategic Directions Charter calls for IU to engage in more out-reach and "in-reach" --making our resources more available to a wider public, and inviting the public to make more use of our expertise. If the University is to respond to external demand for its services in determining future directions, then particular care must be taken (1) to ensure the central role of IU faculty and other teaching professionals in establishing standards for the design, delivery and evaluation of courses and programs, (2) to ensure the quality of all courses and programs offered by IU and (3) to avoid duplication of services, resources, and courses.