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Interim president addresses university-wide concerns at open forum

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Faculty and staff had the opportunity to participate in an open forum with Interim President Dr. David Werner Friday morning in the Crimson Event Center, addressing such concerns including furloughs, funding and Moodle.

Werner began the forum by holding a moment of silence for IUP student Baria Miley, who was killed in a car accident Thursday.

Discussions began with the president, updating faculty on the university's 2010-2011 Performance Funding allocation, which he said turned out to be greater than expected. Funding will be approximately \$5 million. Last year IUP received about \$2.9 million.

"The exact reason [for the change]," he said, "is not entirely clear. The formula changed from what it was last year, and it will change again next year."

He said the extra money would be put down on some of the debt the school has incurred.

Also addressed was the fact that the school will be moving from Moodle to Desire 2 Learn for online coursework. Bill Balint, chief information officer, explained Moodle's history and the State System of Higher Education's request that all schools in the system use the same online course program.

"We are going to support Moodle indefinitely until someone tells me I can't," Balint said.

However, new faculty will be trained on Desire 2 Learn. The software that will help faculty switch from Moodle to Desire 2 Learn has just become available.

The question of whether there could be a designated "speech area" away from the Oak Grove so as not to disrupt the peaceful atmosphere was also posed to Werner. It was noted that other institutions had tried this but were unsuccessful when the American Civil Liberties Union fought the idea and found it in violation of the First Amendment.

The possibility of furloughs – temporary layoffs – for certain employees was addressed. The question was raised due to a recent email stating there will be no retrenchment, or cutting, of tenure and tenure-track faculty.

"It would be less than honest to say I know that's not going to happen," Werner said in regard to the possibility of furloughs. "It's something that just has to play out."

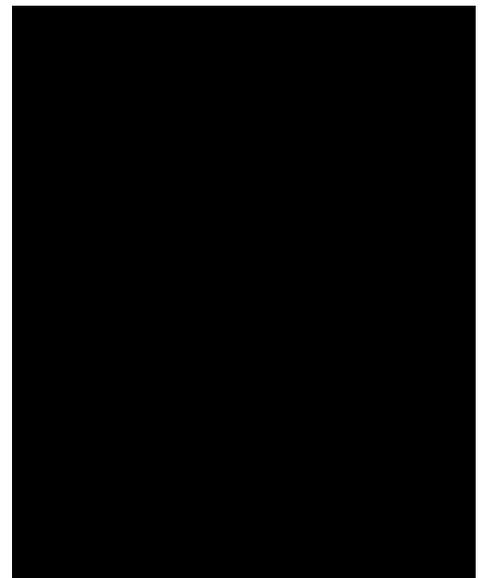
Werner also addressed faculty concerns regarding commencement practices and information on the budgetary process. He said he intends to hold open forums once a month, on different days and at different times so as to accommodate different schedules.

"Good ideas don't always originate on the second floor of Sutton." WHO SAID THIS? ATTRIBUTE.



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Dr. Werner announced that extra state funding would be applied to university debt.



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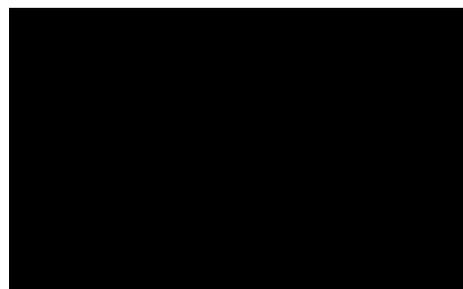
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President David Werner invites the campus community to celebrate IUP Honors Day, 2:00 p.m. in the HUB: <http://ow.ly/4rbXE>
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The AACC will host a Cultural Enrichment Extravaganza tomorrow in Pittsburgh: <http://ow.ly/4rb5O>
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