You can all vote a second time.

The Senate ballot went out to the wrong mailing list and included many who were not eligible to vote for Senate officers. Since the ballots were anonymous it was impossible to sort them out and the Senate decided that the election had to be redone.

Senate approves faculty IT (Information Technology) committee structure.

See p. 3 for details.

The Urban Mission Task Force was created to both address the public relations needs of the University and to facilitate faculty/community interaction. A n initial planning task force created 7 smaller committees. Eddy and H ughey said they did not
intend to take control over research, or to limit research, or to control hiring. Rather their purpose was supplemental. They did not want to limit funds, but rather get new funds, and perhaps supply seed money to get projects started. They also wanted to bring faculty from diverse units together to work on a project, and they might suggest various modifications of old programs or propose new ones. They might also be able to create some valuable internships. The project is supported by Chancellor Gilliland and is intimately involved with the University of Kansas City Board of Trustees and some other community leaders, so there is a chance that some of their ideas might actually be implemented.

Senators commented that faculty had little information about the Urban Initiative, and thus there was suspicion and little sense of faculty ownership or involvement. We weren't sure how members of the original committee or subsequent committees were appointed (apparently they were appointed by the Provost in consultation with the various deans) and members of the task force had not generally reported back to faculty, though there were some exceptions. Interested faculty had been left out of the committee structure, and the ideas of faculty were not sought. Some Senators said that in an administration as hierarchical as the former Lamb/Smelstor regime the committee might have suffered guilt by association, being seen as one more program imposed by the administration.

Both Eddy and Hughey seemed surprised by the assertions of lack of contact with the faculty, and said that they had assumed that faculty was kept informed. They also strongly
denied that there was any attempt on the part of the group to control research. Indeed, Eddy said that he would not be associated with such an effort and would resign if he thought the allegation was true. Instead the program was intended to generate new resources and work in cooperation with existing academic units. It was not supposed to supercede them. They did want to enlarge the definition of scholarship so that community engagement, which is currently often considered service and therefore not much rewarded by the university system, would be considered scholarship. This is what was advocated at the AAHE conference mentioned in an earlier Report. Eddy and Hughey also denied that the UKC Board of Trustees was deciding the research agenda, and said leaders of many community groups were represented in the committees.

Senators said that the rapport between the initiative and the faculty was clearly inadequate. They suggested letters to individual faculty members soliciting ideas, and also recommended that the leadership of the initiative go to faculty meetings in the units to explain the Initiative's process, plans and purpose. Bill Eddy said the Senate was seen as a negative force by some administrators and asked how he could get our cooperation. Senators responded that we were not an academic committee, but a representative committee, and that we were being positive, not negative, in suggesting a much greater level of involvement with the faculty. Some Senators said that when faculty was cut out of the decision making loop it was forced into a negative role. If faculty cooperation and ideas were desired the administration needed to work with faculty. That was elementary democratic theory.

A academic IT structure recommended.

The Senate proposes the following academic IT structure:

- Each unit should select an IT or academic computing committee in a manner approved by the faculty. These committees would discuss the needs of the units and might meet on an occasional basis with the Director of Information Technology.

- Each of these computing committees would select one person to sit on an academic computing committee with representation from all units. This committee would meet on a regular basis with the Director of Information Technology.

- The chair of this computing committee would be chosen by the Senate, and would also serve as the faculty representative on the campus IT committee.

This structure has been discussed with the Director of Information Technology and he finds it acceptable. The Senate will elect its representative at its April 18th meeting. Each unit should select their own IT committee.
Odds & Ends

The Faculty Handbook is almost ready. It will be on the Senate’s web site.... There is still some dispute about the academic calendar, and some Curators apparently think UMKC should go along with Rolla’s need to celebrate the day of the Patron Saint of Engineering (St. Patrick). The discussion is continuing, and various reasons why the break should be moved back to the middle of the term were suggested to Randy Pembroke (IFC representative).... Ed Mills, Senate Chair, was absent because of a bad back and Barbara Glesner Fines (Law) chaired the meeting.... The Senate Report of the March 21st meeting was approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Harris Mirkin,
Faculty Secretary