
M. Tahernezhadi attended for P. Vohra.

Parliamentarian Ferald Bryan was present.

THOSE UNIVERSITY COUNCIL MEMBERS NOT PRESENT: Baker, Balamuralikrishna, Burns, Castle, Cummings, Egeston, Kaplan, Kazmi, Kitterle, Kolb, Lusk, Miller, Nelms, Newman, Pierce, Richmond, Robinson, X. Song, Strader, Walton

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 3.07 P.M.

II. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was approved with minor amendments.

III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 8, 2004 MEETING

(Pages 3-8)

The minutes were approved as written.

IV. PRESIDENT’S ANNOUNCEMENTS

President Peters: Welcome back. We came back to some snowy weather. Parking lots and walkways seem reasonably clear given the amount of snow and I think we did a really, really good job and so, Eddie, you can thank your people for that.

The revenue increases that were projected from the state sources for FY05 are on target but they fall short of even just matching increased liabilities for the annual contributions to the various state employee pension plans.

On the legislative side, there’s still a coalition between Speaker Madigan and Leader Tom Cross and Leader Watson versus the Governor and Senator Jones which could mean another overtime
legislative session. There are some changes in the legislative committees. The Senate has formed a new higher education committee. The House Higher Education Appropriations Committee will have a new chairperson. The FY05 capital budget has yet to be acted on. House Bill 750, left over from last year, would amend the state funding formula for school districts with an income tax/property tax swap. That will have an impact on our budget because that means local school districts would get state general revenue money putting them in direct competition with higher education for funding.

The IBHE put a budget together to be approved at their upcoming meeting, in which the IBHE is proposing an increase of about 1.5% to our base budget. The expectation is that that will go towards salary and will require some sort of match on our part. It will next go to the Governor and then the legislature for action. The majority of the money outside of general revenue is going into student aid, i.e., the Monetary Award Program. MAP funding hasn’t been increasing fast enough to meet demand for two reasons: the increase in the number of students who request aid, and the increase in the amount of aid necessary to cover a reasonable part of tuition and fees. There’s a general funds decrease of $17.8 million, or 45%, in grant programs administered by the BHE. The principle hits are a $10.3 million reduction in health services education grants and about $4.8 million cut from the state matching grant program that provides seed money for attracting federal and corporate research dollars. That $17.8 million has been reallocated to MAP funding.

$328 million in state funding for the State University Retirement System (SURS) has been provided. That’s a mandated increase of $55 million, or 20%, over ’05 levels. That represents the amount certified by SURS as necessary to meet the statutory requirements for funding in ’06.

$350 million has been requested for capital improvements consisting of 29 projects. The IBHE has essentially taken the ’05 capital budgets moved them forward to ’06.

Our private fundraising for the Alumni and Visitor Center is at 90% of our goal. We had a good trip to California for the Silicon Valley Football Classic. I was amazed at the number of California alumni who were at our tent. I’m proud of Joe Novak and the team.

J. Stephen asked how certain NIU was of keeping the increase in student fees to 3%. President Peters and E. Williams explained that while individual fees are contractually constrained (such as the buses), every attempt would be made to keep the increase in the aggregate fee package to a maximum of 3%. President Peters further noted that by the time the fee package gets to him, it’s been gone over carefully by both students and administrators.

V. CONSENT AGENDA

A. 18.32 Deans and the Dean of the University Libraries – see e-mail from Jerry Zar – refer to Rules and Governance (Page 9)

The motion was made by C. Minor and seconded by D. Smith-Shank. The motion passed.

VI. REPORTS FROM COUNCILS, BOARDS, AND STANDING COMMITTEES
A. FAC to IBHAE – Patricia Henry – report – walk-in

**P. Henry:** President Fagan and Provost Keys (Governor’s State) emphasized that in budget discussions we have to fight to maintain quality. They also spoke to the issue of needing a statewide coalition of presidents, faculty, students, and especially business interests to help make the case for higher education to various powers that be. It is necessary to stress that while K-12 is indeed important, higher education is part of the education system as well. Eliot Regenstein, the Governor’s Director of School Reform, has an interest in higher ed as well as K-12 and the IBHE is working with him.

Representative William David (D, 30th District, member of the Higher Education Appropriations Committee) informed the FAC that legislators see affordability, completion of degrees, and diversity of faculty as issues that they are fairly intent about. The FAC pointed out this is all tied to money and, in particular, the matter of assessment taking resources. FAC member Ken Andersen is on the PPA Committee and says that they are looking at ways to simplify the reporting process. Rep. Davis also mentioned House Bill 750 as being something that we should keep an eye on.

Finally, with regard to the pension fund, the Advocacy and Public Policy Committee drafted a resolution:

“Because the financial problems in the SURS system are the result of long-term failures to adequately fund that system (not fun- so not fun, I typed this rather rapidly); and

Because the recommendations of the Governor’s Pension Commission are all focused on reducing faculty benefits, especially for potential hires (and this is indeed one of things that we’re afraid is going to create an underclass); and

Because it is never desirable to create an underclass of faculty;

Therefore, the FAC/IBHEA resolves that the Commission’s solution should be rejected in favor of real, long-term, constitutional and full funding to all public educational retirement systems, in order to protect the quality of higher education.”

We need to work on public relations, and not be seen as professors who only work 15 hours a week.

**President Peters** indicated that **Steve Cunningham** is keeping a very close eye on the pension debate, and probably knows as much as anyone in the state about this process.

B. BOT Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, and Personnel Committee – Joseph “Buck” Stephen and Ferald Bryan – no report

C. BOT Finance, Facilities and Operations Committee – Paul Stoddard and Xueshu Song – no report
P. Stoddard reported that the Board of Trustees met December 9 in the new Board of Trustees’ room in the newly reopened Altgeld Hall. Chair Skoien announced that NIU has taken a leading role in reviving and expanding the neutron therapy program at Fermilab. The lab uses neutron therapy in the aid of certain cancer patients and other patients with certain inoperable conditions. A.Z. Diaz has been hired to administer this program.

Under Action Items, the Board of Trustees approved contract agreements with two unions and authorized nearly a million dollars in renovations and improvements for student housing regions. J. Stephen asked how the collective bargaining agreement for the two unions compared to the rest of campus. E. Williams explained that what we try to do in negotiations is limit all of the increases to the same decision rules that are established for governing all of the increases, but did not know the details of these particular negotiations. When pressed, he said that the base was right at 3.0% or 3.2% but then when you consider steps the increase probably exceeded that.

The Social Science Research Institute, in downtown DeKalb at Third and Locust Streets, is being renamed the William R. Monat Building in honor of Dr. Monat’s contributions to NIU. President Peters explained that he had a recommendation from some faculty who had taught with Bill Monat and suggested we do something for him. Bill was honored and what we’re going to have a public ceremony honoring him and get a plaque for the building. We were very pleased to do that.

P. Stoddard further reported on information from Kathy Buettner regarding the upcoming budget, which looks to have some interesting problems that need to be solved. Also mentioned was a federal proposal to start tracking students by Social Security Number. Part of an ombudsman funding bill included a mandate for all schools that receive federal funding to offer some sort of program on the U.S. Constitution on September 17, the anniversary of the signing of the Constitution. P. Henry asked if the university still has a test on the constitution.

There was a report on the Convocation Center. In its first year it hosted 175 events, grossed over $5 million, and netted $900,000. The second year those numbers went up to 199 events, $6.1 million gross and $961,000 net.

President Peters pointed out that the Board of Trustees has had a vacancy for over a year and three members whose appointments are up, but there is no indication as to whether they will be reappointed or replaced. They will continue to serve until replaced or reappointed.
C. Minor announced that the Rules and Governance Committee would meet to consider the stop-the-tenure-tract policy.

1. **Deletion** of Student Affairs Professional Staff Advisory Committee from the Committee of the University. **ACTIONS ITEM** (Pages 11-12)

C. Minor moved that the Student Affairs Professional Staff Advisory Committee be deleted from the Committees Book, as had been requested by Vice President Hemphill. The Rules and Governance Committee consulted with the SPS Council, the Operating Staff Council and both concur that this should happen. The rationale is that the function of this Committee is now covered by the new Faculty/Staff Grievance Policy. **L. Kamenitsa**, noting that one of the committee’s duties is to review and rank sabbatical requests, asked if the Grievance Committee is going to do that. **B. Hemphill** responded that the same mechanism that is currently in place in the Provost’s office will continue to be used. **W. Tolhurst** asked how multiple requests would be prioritized. **B. Hemphill** answered that he and their executive group would perform that task.

The motion passed.

I. **University Affairs Committee** – Richard Orem, Chair – report – walk-in

**R. Orem:** reported that as a result of the quadrennial evaluation of the Office of the Ombudsman, the committee was making three recommendations: 1) Retain the Office of the Ombudsman in its current form. 2) Review the office every eight years or at the time of next vacancy in the office whichever comes first. Currently the Bylaws specify a four-year review, so this would require a bylaw change. 3) Invite the Ombudsman to provide an annual oral report to University Council.

**W. Tolhurst** asked why we should review the office as opposed to the office holder. **R. Orem:** Initially there was concern about whether we have an office. There’s still a question shared by a small number of people that many of the things that are done within the office can be done elsewhere, but that’s not generally shared by the majority of the community. **President Peters** pointed out that ombudsman offices across the country have either gone away or come back into existence on regular cycles; therefore it’s appropriate that the University Council look at this periodically.

The motion (including referring the bylaws change to Rules & Governance) passed.

J. **Elections and Legislative Oversight Committee** – Sally Webber, Chair – report

**S. Webber** reported that the University Council elections are underway.

**VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**VIII. NEW BUSINESS**
**P. Stoddard:** As I think most of us are aware by now, a predecessor mine in this office, Dan Griffiths, passed away over the break and I think it’s fitting and appropriate that we take a moment in this meeting on record to acknowledge that and thank him again for his service to the community, academic and administrative, at Northern.

**R. Orem** moved that the President and Executive Secretary draft a letter to Dan’s family essentially expressing our gratitude for his service to NIU; **J. Newman-Ryan** seconded. The motion passed by acclamation.

**President Peters:** All those in favor say aye? On behalf of the University and the Council, I sent an appropriate memorial bouquet to the services and it’s a tragedy for us. I had grown very fond of Dan because he was the Executive Secretary my first year and my relationship with him continued. I talked to him three or four times a year in his new position and it’s to Marquette and for the Griffiths family and it’s a loss for NIU so I’ll be pleased to join you in this letter.

**IX. COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR**

**X. INFORMATION ITEMS**

A. [Minutes, Academic Planning Council](#)
B. [Minutes, Athletic Board minutes](#)
C. [Minutes, Campus Security and Environmental Quality](#)
D. [Minutes, Committee on the Advanced Programs for Certification](#)
E. [Minutes, Committee on Initial Teacher Certification](#)
F. [Minutes, Committee on Undergraduate Curriculum](#)
G. [Minutes, Graduate Council](#)
H. [Minutes, Undergraduate Coordinating Council minutes](#)
I. [Minutes, University Assessment Panel](#)
J. [Minutes, University Benefits Committee minutes](#)

**XI. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 4:04 P.M.