
W. Minor attended for F. Kitterle; D. Jackman attended for C. Sorensen.

Parliamentarian Ferald Bryan was present.

THOSE UNIVERSITY COUNCIL MEMBERS NOT PRESENT; Castle, Cunningham, Egeston, Gorman, Hemphill, Kazmi, Kolb, Lusk, Miller, C. Minor, Newman, Pernell, B. Peters, J. Peters, Pierce, Seaver, Smith-Shank, X. Song, Strader, Tollerud, Walton, Wang

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 3:08 P.M.

II. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was adopted as written.

III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MARCH 9, 2005 MEETING

(Pages 3-7)

IV. PRESIDENT’S ANNOUNCEMENTS

V. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Review of Articles 10 and 11 – see e-mails from Jerry Zar and Paul Stoddard – refer to Rules and Governance. (Pages 8-9)

The Consent Agenda was adopted.

VI. REPORTS FROM COUNCILS, BOARDS, AND STANDING COMMITTEES

A. FAC to IBHE – Joseph “Buck” Stephen – report

J. Stephen reported that the Faculty Advisory Council met with Illinois Wesleyan President Richard Wilson on the 25\textsuperscript{th} of March, who talked about the problems that students have. The FAC
also met with Elliott Regenstein, Director of Education Reform for the Office of the Governor. He admits that the pension plan is not our problem but it has to be fixed. We talked to Regenstein about the fact that we’re working at ‘97/98 levels and that we’re getting ever increasing students. We pointed out that despite increased funding in the MAP grants, the increase in the eligible cohort actually means a decrease in award per student. Illinois State right now has 120 faculty searches going on. Fifteen percent of the faculty has departed for institutions that are better financed and have better offers.

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

D. BOT Legislation, Audit, and External Affairs Committee – Donna Smith and Shey Lowman – report (Pages 10-11)

S. Lowman reported on HB 476, which would transfer naming rights from the university to the state. Under this act, Barsema Hall might not be “Barsema Hall” anymore, and any of our endowed chairs could be renamed. A letter of concern has already been written to Michael Madigan from Chair Siegel and President Peters. If anybody is interested in 10 pages of pending legislation, Shey will e-mail them to you.

Kathy Buettner also talked about how we had a flat budget unless some of the pension reform proposals in the Governor’s budget are passed which any raise in the last four years that exceed 3% would become the financial responsibility of the university. Should that happen, I believe that would impact the university about a million dollars a year so hopefully that won’t happen.

Pension reform legislation may be introduced as soon as this week. Chair Siegel stressed that a lot of letters will be needed to protect our pension benefits. All staff and faculty are encouraged to join the NIU Annuitants Association. You can get a membership form on line (www.niu.edu/annuitants/forms.shtml).

The other significant item is that for the first time in history, NIU had no material findings during the auditing process for the university. The Board of Trustees is very pleased, so we’re all to be commended.

E. BOT – Paul Stoddard – report – walk-in

P. Stoddard that the full Board approved all recommended by the, Academic Affairs and Finance and Operations subcommittees. One item was the approval of sabbatical leaves, and the Board expressed their strong support for the sabbatical program. The Board approved to automatically extend President Peter’s appointment annually through June 30, 2010. The Board also voted to increase the President’s salary by the same 3% and 1% salary increment that the rest of the campus saw.
The new Women’s Basketball Coach is Carol Owens. She is an NIU CHANCE alumna and had a very impressive record while here, both academically and athletically. Fundraising has already raised $5.8 million this year which is a million more than last year. Elizabeth Schwantes, who has several family ties to the campus community, has donated almost half a million dollars to fully endow three full scholarships in the areas of computer science, geography, and psychology. Finally, backing up his commitment to increasing the endowment for the university, President Peters announced that he and his wife were establishing an endowed scholarship in the area of public service.

I. Legg underlined the sabbatical stability. He made it a priority to be sure that the Board of Trustees understood the importance of sabbatical leaves in a declining budget period and they endorsed it.

F. Academic Policy Committee – John Wolfskill, Chair – report

J. Wolfskill reported that the Academic Policy Committee has been reviewing the APPM Section on Student Evaluation and Instruction. It is anticipated that revisions will be proposed for approval by the UC on May 4th, the last meeting of the year. There will be many stylistic edits to clean up the current text in several passages. There are three specific changes to the rules that will be proposed, all of which are concerned with which courses must be evaluated. Added will be intersession and summer courses (currently optional). Also added are all multiple sections taught by a single instructor (only one need be evaluated at present). The committee is also recommending that the current minimum thresholds, 20 undergraduates or 10 graduates, be cut in half.

The committee is still addressing the policy regarding use of comments from the student evaluations. There is some ambiguity in current language and no uniform policy across campus. Discussion among J. Stephen, J. Wolfskill, W. Tolhurst, W. Baker, and K. Davidson further illustrated this point. Questions were asked about interpretation of the APPM text, specifically which section the comments fall under, and legal ownership of the comments. No definitive answers were forthcoming, other than the need to enact a clear, uniform policy.

A. Nelms sought, and received clarification from K. Davidson that setting a policy that comments are to be used in evaluations would be acceptable. A. Nelms recommended that the committee take that step.

L. Kamenitsa asked about the public release of evaluation materials. In particular, things that are used for personnel evaluation cannot be used publicly but ones that are not used as part of personnel evaluations could theoretically be released publicly?

P. Henry pointed out that too low a threshold minimum would allow comments to be attributed to specific students, but that in departments with several small classes, it would be possible for some instructors to never be evaluated.

I. Legg reminded the council that the primary function of our faculty is the education of our students and the evaluation we give to the faculty is important in terms of how we determine merit.
W. Tolhurst brought recommendations regarding the Computing Facilities Advisory Committee and the Parking committee to the Council. Rules and Governance has suggested adding each to the section of the “Committees” book listing the committees that submit annual reports to the University Council. In addition, it is proposed to add the Faculty Senate President/University Council Executive Secretary as an *ex officio*, non-voting member to each. A proposed new section of the Bylaws, detailing the membership and duties of the CFAC was also introduced.

A discussion of the merits and ramifications of turning advisory committees into standing committees followed, with A. Kaplan, W. Tolhurst, and D. Swanson taking part. P. Stoddard indicated that the intent of the changes was merely to increase communication between these committees and the rest of the university community. A. Kaplan stated that she had no problem with that. C. Booth raised a question about the role of an advisory committee in decision making.

A. Nelms asked if the CFAC will remain advisory and if so, what the point of the bylaw addition was. P. Stoddard responded that is to ensure that there’s always a University Council presence on that committee and that the committees report back to the UC. P. Henry asked how people currently get their concerns to the committee. P. Stoddard answered that each college has a representative on the committee, by most people did not know that this committee exists much less than who their representative on it is.

W. Baker asked if the committee might not be given more authority. P. Stoddard answered that these committees were formed specifically by the people they report to to help them make decisions and it would be out of order for the UC to dictate duties.

D. Graf expressed concerns about the nature of the annual report, and how specific it would need to be. P. Stoddard said he felt a report covering the major decisions and rationales was all that would be needed.

Following a suggestion from the provost, J. Stephen moved that the motion be withdrawn.

The motion passed.

I. University Affairs Committee – Richard Orem, Chair – no report

J. Elections and Legislative Oversight Committee – Sally Webber, Chair – no report

VII. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

P. Stoddard directed members’ attention to testimony from J. Stephen, S. Lowman, and D. Smith regarding budget issues that was given to Representative Pritchard during a local community meeting with legislators for the state of Illinois.

B. Letter from the Faculty Senate of Eastern Illinois University discussing state pension system (Page 20-21)

P. Stoddard referred members to a letter from the Faculty Senate of Eastern Illinois University to the Governor expressing some of their concerns about the pension proposals.

I. Legg reminded members that while expressing their opinions to lawmakers, they should do so as private citizens and not as university representatives.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

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 3:55 P.M.