
W. Minot attended for J. Grush.

Parliamentarian Ferald Bryan was present.

THOSE UNIVERSITY COUNCIL MEMBERS NOT PRESENT: Acardo, Baker, Balamurikrishna, Doederlein, Egeston, Factor, Gorman, Holmes, Kolb, Novotney, Pernell, B. Peters, Richmond, Schoenbachler, D. Smith, S. Song, Tallon, Tolene, Walton, Wolfskill, Young

I. CALL TO ORDER

President Peters: We call the January 25, 2006 University Council to order. We really have a very, very light agenda today so we’ll be out of here fairly quickly unless something happens.

The meeting was called to order at 3:15 p.m.

II. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

President Peters: We have some adjustments to the agenda. First of all, there’s a walk-in item. It’s a memo from Provost Legg to Paul Stoddard and it has to do with proposed language clarification. That will be on the Consent Agenda as Item B. It will be referred to Rules and Governance. All right, so that’s this January 20th memo, IV, Consent Agenda B. We also have a walk-in item for which there is no paper. Label it C and it’s Academic Calendar for 2015-2016, which we have to have ten years out. It goes to University Affairs. We have to set our calendar ten years out so that will be sent to University Affairs. All right? Then there is an addendum to the minutes. This piece of paper. So those are the corrections to the agenda. I will call for adoption of the agenda. Is there a motion? We have a motion. A second? All those in favor say aye. All right, we have an agenda.

The agenda was approved as amended.

III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 7, 2005 MEETING

(Pages 3-6) and addendum – walk-in
President Peters: Now, III – Approval of the Minutes of December 7. I’ll call for additions and corrections and remember there is an addendum. Are you raising your hand or scratching? Well, do we know how to spell your name? All right, we will correct the spelling of Dean Sorensen’s name. Rathindra, you have a problem?

R. Bose: My name does not appear in any place, present or absent. So it should be noted that I was not here.

President Peters: We’ll handle that. We’ll add that. Rathindra is missing.

P. Stoddard: I wasn’t here either Rathindra and I don’t remember seeing you.

President Peters: All right. Motion to approve the minutes? Second? All those in favor say aye. Okay.

The minutes were approved as amended.

IV. PRESIDENT’S ANNOUNCEMENTS

President Peters: Well, let me see. Some items of interest. The provost search which is, you know, the most important thing on my agenda this semester, is moving along quite well. Please take a look at the website in case you ever have information. As we move through time now, that will be updated routinely. There is a link in case you want to comment to the committee about aspects of the search. You know, anything that’s on your mind that will be helpful in terms of qualifications of the kind of candidate you would like to see in the pool. We do have a meeting this week. Our search consultant is coming in. We’ve had a slight switch in the person which actually is considered an upgrade. Michael Baer who is someone who is a scholar and a dean. He was a provost at Northeastern University and for about a decade was the Vice President for American Council on Education so in that capacity, he really knows almost everyone who’s anybody in American higher education and he has personally taken over this contract and he is going to be with us I think, tomorrow. In about two weeks, the committee will begin the work of sorting through the files. There have been a lot of contacts made. I can’t tell you the number of applications that are in, but in two weeks, that’s when we start to get serious. We’re on track; it’s attracting a lot of attention nationwide and a lot of calls of inquiry which we always refer immediately to the search committee, but we’re getting a very, very rich pool to replace Ivan who will be retiring in June. That’s going along swimmingly well again. Again the ads were out in the Chronicle. As is usual in these kinds of jobs, ads very rarely attract the kind of candidate you want; it’s always the contacting that does it and that’s why we have a search firm.

Let me see. Okay. Let me comment just a little bit about the state budget which is in a state of becoming. The Illinois Higher Board of Education is submitting to the Governor a request budget that hopefully includes some increase in our general revenue and now what happens is that the Governor’s Office and particularly the Office of Management and Budget, analyses that and then from that is created the Governor’s Budget and the Governor will present that budget, I believe it’s February 15, and then we won’t know until that point what is included for higher
education and the thing we’re interested in most particularly is the general revenue portion which, you know, we haven’t had an increase in four years. As a matter of fact, we’ve had cuts. Last year we had a flat budget and we are not expected any reductions and we’re hopeful for some sort of increase but I’m not sure. All right. That’s part of that budget and the other part is the capital requests and that’s a little confusing this year. The Illinois Higher Board of Education has a list of priorities and we have projects on that list. The top priority is Stevens. There’s some planning money for a computational science building. There’s some other projects on the list and some capital renewal money, you know, to fix our aging buildings. We’re not sure what the status of that is. There hasn’t been a capital bill for about three years. Now, this is an election year and so usually in election years, you do find capital bills. It’s confusing this year because there is also the Governor’s announcement in his State of the State address about a couple of hundred million dollar public works bill that would be funded from revenues from Keno. I don’t know if you’ve ever played Keno before; I guess it’s like electronic bingo. All right, now to the best of my knowledge, higher education was not included in that bill. That was a K-12 bill to the best of my knowledge because there was no information on that. The Governor yesterday, I understand from news report, pulled the Keno portion. In other words, the funding mechanism is not there and so there’s a challenge to legislature to find an alternative funding mechanism. That doesn’t mean Keno isn’t in the horizon. The other complicating factor is that Attorney General Madigan yesterday ruled that the Governor did not have the sole authority to expand gambling to Keno; that there had to be legislative action. So, you know what – you’ve got a mess basically.

The third element is that through the Governor’s Opportunity Returns program through the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, there have been several announcements made by the Governor throughout the past couple of years that have some implications for universities across the state. We are in two regions; we’re in the state-line region with Rockford and a couple of years ago we got a half a million dollars in program money to deliver business programs in Rockford under that. We’re also in the Cook County area. That enterprise opportunities zone has not been announced, you know, because that’s huge. We are in that and the other one. Anyway, those commitments that were made to universities for various projects are probably going to get blended into the IBHE list. So I hope that confuses you enough because it is pretty confusing. For me, it’s always the bottom line; will there be enough money so that we will be able to move ahead with the renovation of Stevens and the planning on the computation building. I don’t know; I don’t know. Right now it’s in the hands of the Governor and the legislature.

All right, then in addition to that, the Governor announced a tax credit, a tuition tax credit plan, that obviously is a good thing in that it helps parents and students, but particularly parents, have some relief from the escalating costs of higher education due to raising tuition which is the result of cuts in state support. So, that bill, it’s called the College Tuition Tax Credit, and I have a one-pager if anybody wants this, I can get it Xeroxed and – the elements of that is a credit, a tax credit. Now a tax credit is not a deduction; a tax credit comes of your tax liability which is always better than a deduction and it would provide every family up to a thousand dollar annual credit per student attending a qualified school in Illinois based on tuition paid. That would be net of any financial aid. So if, you know, your tuition bill was $3,000 and you had $2,000 worth of aid and out-of-pocket expense to the family would be $1,000, once that gets certified, you would
be eligible – that family – for a tax credit of $1,000 and it would be refundable. In other words, if you owed $500 tax, you could claim a $500 refund because you had a thousand dollar tax credit. Okay? That credit is also – it’s not just for the publics, it’s for the privates. Now, that is a good thing but it doesn’t help us directly. It helps the student directly and us indirectly but what really I’m waiting to see is what our general revenue looks like and that’s an important aspect of it. I’ll take questions in a minute. This does require action on the part of the legislature and I’m not sure where that’s going to come out. The question now is how do we pay for it and what about people who are having problem with access; people in the lower income brackets. So, who knows. Anyway, I don’t know if it’s a center piece, but it was a key to the Governor’s budget message. That along with the job bill, the capital bill. I’ll stop there because I saw that Buck had a question.

**J. Stephens:** I thought the tax credit was tied to a certain grade performance by the student.

**President Peters:** Yes.

**J. Stephen:** I think you should speak against that. I think the line was a B average or better. I think that will lead to a lot of pressure, not for students to do better in all cases, but for faculty to be more lenient and I think that that’s a provision I’d like you or the appropriate person to speak against. Maybe make it a C or better or something but a B is – I don’t think that’s fair.

**President Peters:** I listened to the Governor’s speech and I listened to the flourish – the rhetorical flourish – and I think linked that, he said that this isn’t free; you have to earn it. I think that from a policy point of view – I think from his conception, that he didn’t look at it as a public good but we are beginning – what we’re doing now and we’re getting a list of two kinds of things. One is the policy itself and what is our response to it and is it good public policy. I would say that the core of it is a good idea. Now then, are there aspects of it that are troubling to us? That may well be one. We’ve discussed that already; we haven’t come to a conclusion yet but I’m glad I had your input. The other is implementation issues because for a student to – we’re not sure how this is going to be implemented and it very could be problematic. It puts us in the role of a couple of things that are troubling. First of all, the student has to show up whether they need it or not, at the financial aid office to see if they’re eligible for financial aid and then we’re in a position of certifying that. Then we’re in the position of certifying the B average and then we have to interface with the Department of Revenue. The Department of Revenue will want us to send over this material by Social Security number and we’ve pledged to get rid of that. We’ve pledged that to the students and so, you know, I consider that implementation a thing that could be worked up but what you raised is a fundamental policy issue. What it says here in the one-pager is “students must be in their freshman or sophomore years only.” So when the presidents met in a conference call right after this, the question was “what’s a freshman or a sophomore” and you can imagine thirteen presidents talking to state officials about “is that thirty hours? Is it sixty hours? You know, that can be worked out. Freshmen and sophomores only and must be enrolled at least half-time in an undergraduate program like an associates degree program or a bachelor degree program. That all has to be made operationalized. Freshmen must have obtained at least a B grade point average throughout high school. All right, so it’s like a Hope Scholarship in Georgia. I mean, what’s a B? I mean is it a B in the core; is it a B in PhysEd? I mean, you know, a B in high school and sophomores,
that means those who, for whatever, they got their first freshmen year, now however you define sophomore is it thirty hours? Is it twenty-four hours? They have to have a B average in their first year of college to qualify for the sophomore year. Students in certificate and graduate programs will not qualify. Okay? So, I think basically what we have – see this one-pager – is all we have right now. So it is a policy proposal that will be – for which hearings will be held and action taken. My guess is – I think it’s appealing enough so that we can expect some sort of passage and that we’ve indicated we certainly want to be part of the process and certainly we need to be part of the implementation because this is not straight forward.

J. Stephen: Another aspect that I think is important for NIU considering our non-traditional student base, how about some extensions perhaps based on income to a wage earner who’s returning to school? That accounts for a lot of our students.

President Peters: I think all of these things will probably come out – I’m not an expert on this and we certainly about the business now of doing our due diligence. I think the one thing about it, if you make it a public good – in other words if you uncap the average – the state wouldn’t be able to afford it at a thousand dollars a tax credit.

J. Stephen: Probably true.

President Peters: So, you know, my guess is that there’ll be a lot of chewing on this. The session, by the way, is supposed to adjourn April 7 and at least on the House side, each member limited to three priority bills and so there is an attempt – they want to get out; it’s an election year. That’s the other thing to understand about all of this. This is an election year.

All right, so that’s the budget. I may indicate that at the federal level, we still don’t have a higher education re-appropriation or a re-authorization of the Higher Education Act and this is going on three years. There has been some action that has caused a lot of people a lot of heartache and that is cuts in student aid and certain limitations on Pell grants. That’s going to make it harder for students to get to university and I think that in part stimulated the Governor to come up with this tax credit plan. The authorization, the re-authorization, of the House Higher Education Act is something we’re tracking on because it will begin to have an impact on our lives more than it has in the past. There is a commission that’s set up by the new Secretary of Education, Spellings, that is taking a hard look at higher education, particularly public higher education, and field hearings are being held across the country and in March the Spellings Commission will be holding a field hearing at Western Illinois and I know we’re going to have representatives there and I suspect that the IBHE will be represented and perhaps our representative to the Faculty Advisory Committee and our students will want to attend. Much of the focus of this commission is going to be on accountability and accessibility issues and one of the things that looming large to which we have to pay considerable attention is a heavy focus on outcome assessment in the collegiate years. Maybe the analogy is “no child left behind” and the issue is how we can sure that if the federal government is putting money into universities, that students are getting out of it what they need to get out of it and how do we know that and part of that has to do with outcome assessment. I’ve been through this in my career many times. I mean, how do you measure what a general education is; what are its components? Is there a test of general education or are we really talking about a liberal education in the classic sense. I’ve
been through all of that. This is something we need to pay attention to because they’re serious about this and so I guess what that means is in the Higher Education Re-authorization Act, there could be mandatory outcomes assessment linked to the investment that federal government puts into higher ed and they put a lot of money in, particularly on the research side, Pell grants, you name it. So we have that to come up with. By the way, in 2007 let’s remember that under our Learning Commission Re-accr

V.

CONSENT AGENDA

A. Staffing concerns – refer to Resource, Space and Budgets

B. APPM, Section II, Item 18 – proposed language clarification – refer to Rules & Governance – see memo from J. Ivan Legg – walk-in

C. Create academic calendar for 2015-2016 – refer to University Affairs

President Peters: Is there a motion to approve the Consent Agenda? Second? All those in favor say aye.

The Consent Agenda was approved as amended and added to.

VI. REPORTS FROM COUNCILS, BOARDS, AND STANDING COMMITTEES

A. FAC to IBHE – Sharon Holmes – report (Pages 7-15)

President Peters: Sharon Holmes could not be here today but on pages 7-15 there’s an extensive report that she’s prepared and she’s requested that if anybody has comments or questions, that they e-mail her. Is that right? I may be able to answer some questions if you have them. I think it’s a pretty thorough report and I like the action plan of the Faculty Advisory Committee and I guess now is the time for that group to get involved with some of these issues but I might just comment that the IBHE has undergone changes in terms of leadership. Judy Erwin, who was a former state representative has taken over as the Executive Director and I’ve had many talks with her. She’s very savvy and understands Illinois government and I think
that’s going to work well with us and there are several new staff members at IBHE so I’ve been very pleased with the cooperation we’ve received from them and I’m glad that the Faculty Advisory Committee – but I think the Student Advisory Committee has also been pretty active. All right, anybody want to comment or question on that?

Okay, let’s see. We have no other reports. Does anybody want to comment on any report – any non-report?

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 – Rachel Turner and Shey Lowman – no report

E. BOT – Paul Stoddard – no report

F. Academic Policy Committee – Colin Booth, Chair – no report

G. Resources, Space, and Budgets Committee – Amy Rose, Chair – no report.

H. Rules and Governance Committee – John Wolfskill, Chair – no report

J. Stephen: I’m attending for John Wolfskill for Rules and Governance. I’ll communicate the motion from the Provost’s Office to Professor Wolfskill and I assume he’ll contact the committee members via e-mail.

I. University Affairs Committee – Xueshu Song, Chair – no report

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

VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

President Peters: Okay, all right, any unfinished business?

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

President Peters: Any new business?

IX. COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

President Peters: Anything for the good of the order?
X. INFORMATION ITEMS

A. Minutes, Academic Planning Council
B. Minutes, Athletic Board minutes
C. Minutes, Campus Security and Environmental Quality
D. Minutes, Committee on Advanced Programs for Certification in Education
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

J. Stephen: Motion to adjourn.

President Peters: Motion to adjourn. Second? All those in favor say aye. Go home.

The meeting adjourned at 3:42 p.m.