I. CALL TO ORDER

President Peters: Let me call the Wednesday, May 3, 2006 University Council to order.

The meeting was called to order at 3:12 P.M.

II. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

President Peters: Let me call for the adoption of today’s agenda. Is there a motion? So moved. Second? All those in favor say aye. Opposed? We have an agenda.

The agenda was approved as written.

III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE APRIL 5, 2006 MEETING (Pages 3 – 6)

President Peters: On pages 3-6 is the minutes of April 5. I’ll call for additions and corrections. Hearing none, move to adopt? Second? All those in favor say aye. Opposed? We have minutes.

The minutes were approved as written.

IV. EXECUTIVE SESSION

President Peters: I’ll call for a motion to go into Executive Session for the purpose of receiving a report of the Committee to evaluate the President of the Faculty Senate/Executive Secretary of the University Council. There’s a motion; is there a second? It’s not debatable. All those in favor say aye. Opposed? Everyone who’s not a member, leave.

A. Report for the Committee to evaluate the President of the Faculty Senate/Executive Secretary of the University Council

V. PRESIDENT’S ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. Recognition of University Council members whose terms are:

President Peters: You’ll notice on your agenda that we are today recognizing several individuals whose terms on the Council have been completed. I don’t know if they’re all here but Sally Webbers, Richard Orem, Amy Rose, Nancy Castle, Colin Booth, Pat Henry, David Gorman, and Larry Gregory, if those of you who are here, would stand and receive our hearty thank you and congratulations. Completing a term but re-elected is Paul Stoddard, Geology & Environmental Geosciences. Thank you. Let us welcome newly elected individuals; I don’t
know if they’re here today, any of them, but if you are, please stand. David Wade, Laurie Elish-Piper, Jean Pierce, Linda Derscheid, Joseph “Buck” Stephen, I know he’s here, James Giles. You know, I got a very nice copy of your book from the President of the University of Alabama. Congratulations. Just wanted to let you know that a great faculty member at NIU has published in the Alabama press. I think that’s really a nice idea; I’m going to start doing that. Lee Sido from Art. Not on your list but a write-in is Eric Mogren from History. There he is. Sorry about that. It didn’t get printed. Welcome everyone and this is a very important group and I’m sure you’re going to enjoy your time with us so let’s congratulate all the new members.

Completed

Sally Webber, Accountancy
Richard Orem, Literacy Education
Amy Rose, Counseling, Adult & Health Education
Nancy Castle, Communicative Disorders
Colin Booth, Geology & Environmental Geosciences
Patricia Henry, Foreign Languages and Literatures
David Gorman, English
Larry Gregory, Art

Re-elected

Paul Stoddard, Geology & Environmental Geosciences

Newly Elected

David Wade, Management
Laurie Elish-Piper, Literacy Education
Jean Pierce, Leadership, Educational Psychology and Foundations
Linda Derscheid, Family, Consumer and Nutrition Sciences
Joseph “Buck” Stephen, Mathematical Sciences
James Giles, English
Lee Sido, Art

Provost Search update

President Peters: Items to just go through at the end of the year; end of the year items in no particular order but I see we have the provost search update. Our third candidate has left the campus and we are in intense evaluation period. I want to – I can’t commend more the work of the search committee co-chaired by Paul and some of you have been on it. It has been a long but very productive year with the search committee who, with our search firm and with the administrative help of Dr. Tom Krepple, has produced at this point so far, knock on wood, because we’re not done yet, it’s been the best search I’ve ever been associated with in terms of the people, the process, the care, the work of the committee and, from top to bottom, the quality of the candidates. It’s truly been a labor of love. Where we are right now – we’ve had three candidates, outstanding people, come to campus. We are getting evaluations from the many,
many people that interacted with the individuals when they were on campus. Unfortunately, not everyone who wanted to meet with the individuals could; there were just too many but it was a rigorous two and a half days. Belief me, when they leave, they’re spent. We will be in an evaluation period for several days. We will receive confidential reports from our search firm on reference calls on and off lists and then I will use my judgment on behalf of the campus and the Trustees and go hard after the top choice. This won’t be easy because each one is outstanding in their own right and has strengths and difference in backgrounds. We have met our deadlines for completing this part of the search and now we move into the more – a difficult part – and that is judgment and it’s going to be exhilarating to go through this. I want to thank the committee again. I’ll be communicating as needed as we go into this part of the process.

Okay, there’s that. Some things for your information since it’s the end of the year. Our commencement is coming up in two weeks. We will graduate 2,600 individuals and that’s the best time of year for us isn’t it? Twenty-six hundred people will be getting their degrees and we’re expecting at least 24,000 moms, pops, friends, neighbors, husbands, spouses, wives, grandparents, neighbors – you name it. People who thought they were attending the OAR concert and got into commencement in three very intense ceremonies. So that’s a good thing.

Let me give you an update on where we are with the FY07 state budget, which is being debated as we speak in the Senate. Several appropriations committees are discussing various parts of a budget bill that has been put together by the Governor and the legislative leaders, the two Democratic legislative leaders, and it looks as if this is moving toward a conclusion by tomorrow. In other words, it looks as if a deal has been struck. This is politics, legislative politics, so we’re not sure but it looks like they’re be voting by tomorrow. I am pleased to report that so far, in the House passed version yesterday of the Higher Ed Appropriation Bill and in the bill that is being debated in the Senate today, which I believe is a foregone conclusion because the votes are there – as I stated in my letter I think of February 15 to you, there is an increase for the first time in four years in our base budget in the range of 1.23% something like that after adjustments are made. This is welcome news and I’m very pleased about that. There’s some other things – I’ll talk more about that in a minute and what happens now. There are some other things that I think are of importance, particularly to students in the budget bill and that is there will be an increase in the monetary award program, the MAP Program, which is aid to needy students, not nerdy students. They may be nerdy students. That’s the base monetary award program of 34.4 million, which hopefully will go some way toward helping families, and our students afford an education. Of that 34.4, 7.6 million comes from general revenue and the balance will come from the sale of the Illinois Student Assistant Corporation’s loan portfolio. All right? They’re not sure what that will raise but estimates are 90 million to 100 million, maybe more, maybe less. I don’t know. As a matter of interest to you, currently NIU students, only thirty students have ISAC loans. For many years now, most of our students get Sally May. We prefer Sally May. Better rates, better terms. Much better rates; much better terms. All right, so what’s in the portfolio, the ISAC portfolio several years back, I’m not sure but current students, we have thirty. Then you remember we talked in here and I remember Buck Stephens questioned whether or not we should limit a tax credit to students with a B average. The Governor proposed a tax credit of like $1,000 to parents with students, that has morphed into what I call “MAP Plus”. In order words, it’s no longer a tax credit but it’s going into the MAP program and what is being debated as we speak and it’s changing as we speak, MAP Plus is
another 34.4 million dollars, all right, so 68.4 in total, to sophomores, juniors or seniors, all right not high school students, but sophomores, juniors or seniors in good academic standing, good academic standing, for families with adjusted gross incomes of less than $200,000. All right, you see, so this is more of a middle class relief. I said less than $200,000. I mean, that could be zero, you know. That emolument would be $250 per semester; $500 total, directly payable to the university of choice. All right? So, what’s being debated right now is in the House version, this is for people who are not MAP One eligible. All right, in other words people who weren’t eligible for the – in the Senate version that’s being debated as I ran over here, they were trying to make it piggy-backed so that those students who had MAP One could also have MAP Two. There’ll be something like that. So it’s different than a tax credit. It’s better. It is better, even though I signed a letter that supported the tax credit, this is better, fairer I think. Now, I don’t have any numbers for you. I don’t have any idea what that will mean. Of course, what it will mean in terms of application is again a little tricky, because when the money runs out, the money runs out. So it’s probably for whoever is eligible, first come, first served or something like that.

Now, there’s no major capital bill. If it occurs, it’s going to occur in veto session. No capital bill again but we kind of knew that. Maybe in the fall. No major capital bill for anything, I mean, roads, you know, nothing. There may be some nickels and dimes, but no major capital bill. That’s not a surprise.

Now, there are a couple of steps. It has to be passed by the Senate and the legislature has to pass. I fully expect the Governor to sign this bill pretty quick because it has many of the things in it that he wanted, even if it may be a little different or at a different level so I don’t expect any – there may be amendatory vetoes and line item vetoes on some of it but I don’t think ours will come into play on that. With that said, I think we can go back to what I said in my letter, this will permit us to now, you know, we are modeling now and thinking about some sort of a salary increment. The bulk of that will go into salaries which, of course, will help very directly students because of the, you know, because of the pay that goes into the envelopes of the faculty and the staff so I’m pleased about that.

There’s another thing that this permits me to talk about in a little more precise way. Remember in February in my letter I said because of issues that had come up, we were going to have a dedicated fund for critical maintenance issues and quick response for repairs of academic buildings. Remember I said that? I’m going to put some substance on that today and some operational directives. We’re going to provide an allocation to the Provost’s Office, that’s where the monies going to be and the procedures are going to be set. Several hundred thousand dollars to take care of some academic facilities issues and I know there is a priority list and I talked to the Provost Office today and here’s some of the things that I think you can expect to be addressed in the short to near term. You know, summer is good time to get some of these done and I’m not talking about emergencies now, but just some of the things we need to get done. For instance, modification of the entryways in Zulauf Hall and the Art Building to facilitate accessibility for physically challenged students. That’s been an issue I’ve seen so we’re going to try to get that done. Installation of air conditioning in the student training food prep kitchen, laboratories and the Chandelier Room. I like to go over there and eat but I wouldn’t want to prepare any meals there. It’s pretty hot. We’re going to get that done. We’re going to replace and upgrade the student seating in the 150 chair Music Building lecture hall. I see the Dean’s
here. I wanted to know if they have those little places to put your popcorn and you’re soda and they said no; it’s not going to happen. We’re going to have some enhancements to the University Writing Center in Stevenson Tower South. I think we’ve got about seventy-five computer terminals over there. That needs some work. In general, we’re going to be upgrading general-purpose smart classrooms on campus to include information and interactive display boards and to enhance teaching/learning informational exchanges. We’re going to be doing that and several other things like that. So hopefully, that’s taken as some good news for the teaching/instructional side of the house and students. I think that money is going to go a long way towards these projects. We’ll try to add to that and the priorities as being set in the Provost Office. I might add too, just one thing for your information; you know the DeKalb I88 toll way is going to be closed for modification soon through two weeks before move in day. All right, but I’ve been informed by the Vice President for Student Affairs, working with others, that we better have a contingency plan for that. So I’m just letting those of you who have things to do off campus and will be coming back, just be aware of that. It will result in a much better interchange and they’ve got to do it sometime. It will be disruptive. All right, okay.

Some other things. Just a little bit about enrollment and that’s something we monitor all the time and we have enrollment management in place. We’re on track to hit our enrollment targets and it’s stable again which is what we want. Our enrollment target is 3,050 first-time freshmen. It looks like we’re going to be right on that. 2,050 transfer students and that’s a little iffier because May 1, this past week, Monday, was the deadline for freshmen. Transfer students is a little bit later. So then we are going to have again, about 18,000 undergrads and about 7,000 grad and professional although there’s been a little downturn in grad because of a couple reasons. One is the economy. Economy’s good, grad enrollment is down. Economy’s bad, grad enrollment is up. They’re stable, but down a little bit. We’ll be at about 25,000 students. In this regard, I understand from Gip Seaver, that we’re going to soon have an announcement on the new Executive Director of Enrollment Management Services, which is a very, very important position. So we have stable numbers but we also have highly impacted areas and demand for courses as you all know. To that end, I’m making available to the Provost Office up to $150,000 for high demand courses as needed and justified if the increased enrollment is there so that the academic planning can commence now rather than wait until later on. That in our wonderful way of leveling courses that we have; what’s the name of that system – Just In Time – one of the best processes in the country, and it’s being modeled all over the place. I think we’re going to be in good shape.

That is the end of my report. Okay? I think I’ll wait until the end to take questions.

VI. CONSENT AGENDA

President Peters: Let’s move on to VI. We have no consent agenda.

VII. REPORTS FROM COUNCILS, BOARDS, AND STANDING COMMITTEES

President Peters: Let’s move to VII and hear reports from councils, boards, and standing committees. The first report is Academic Policy Committee.
A. FAC to IBHE – Sharon Holmes – no 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 – report

C. Booth: Okay, this is the third and, of course, final report on the student evaluation process that we’ve been doing for quite a while. The report is on your attachment, you’re walk-in attachment and we address two main issues. One which arose because there were some questions from departments about the revision of the wording on the Academic Policies and Procedures Manual that had been done earlier this semester. So we just issued a statement for the record just to clarify what we think the situation is as far as the committee goes and that is that the revised wording of the APPM requires that several factors listed must be addressed on the Student Evaluation Forms but it doesn’t specify the wording to be used so the departments are encouraged to devise their own wording as appropriate for their particular disciplines and we also noted that departments have the discretion to give whatever weight they choose in the personnel process to the individual questions there. So if some questions aren’t particularly appropriate to a discipline, it’s up to the department to kind of word them appropriately and consider them appropriately. So the statement for the record is just there at the beginning. We spend quite a lot of time mainly be e-mail correspondence on the student evaluation for on-line courses which turned out to be a much more complicated issue than we expected I think – than I expected anyway. There are considerable variations in how on-line courses are taught, how they’re delivered, what sort of systems are available and are used for this. Differences in the technical abilities of the departments and instructors in delivering the courses and ultimately also in how student evaluations can be administered so we ended up looking really at two questions to do with this. One was where does the student evaluation questionnaire fit into the faculty personnel process and one was the sort of nuts and bolts, how the evaluations actually are administered for on-line courses. With regard to the first part, the faculty personnel process, we just recognized that there are substantial differences between teaching on-line courses and teaching face-to-face classroom courses so that the standard questions that the department uses for its face-to-face classroom courses may not be appropriate for the on-line courses that they offer. For example, it can be difficult for on-line course students to distinguish issues of teaching quality versus problems or issues with the system delivery depending on what sort of system is being used. So we are simply at this point drawing the attention of the departments to the concept in the APPM that departments are encouraged to use special evaluation forms when courses are offered for the first time or are offered in a non-conventional format which we would consider on-line courses to be in or in other special circumstances. We do encourage
departments to modify their evaluation forms for the on-line courses that they teach. We think that will be helpful in the faculty personnel evaluation process.

As far as the nuts and bolts issue was concerned, the actual administration of student evaluations for on-line courses, there are a lot of different systems which could be used and which are being used. It is possible to have systems on inter-active servers where students can respond to that. Not all departments, however, have the technological capability to administer the server-based systems nor does the university currently provide the system, to our knowledge at least. There are possibilities of doing student evaluations by e-mail or by old-fashioned paper mail. The basic problem is guaranteeing student anonymity of the response while at the same time preventing multiple submissions. For example, the disgruntled student who wants to write twenty evaluations for the one professor sort of thing. So there has to be some means of kind of making sure that one response comes per student and only one response comes per student but at the same time, the anonymity of the student has to be protected. We propose two levels of approach. First the long term approach over the next five-year time frame, possible even less. We think it should be possible to incorporate an appropriate evaluation response mechanism or system in the student information system that is being developed by the university. So we are proposing that the University Council ask Testing Services to develop in the context of the new information system, a secure web-based method administering student evaluations for on-line courses that maintain both student anonymity and single submission by an individual student. So we can follow that up after I summarize the next bit. In the short time, I mean we realize that’s going to take some time developing an we don’t know what the technical issues necessarily are with that, in the sort term we do recognize there are different capabilities and preferences indifferent departments and different courses. Some courses may actually have face-to-face sessions where evaluations can be done; others do not. Some departments can use servers; others don’t. So we’re not actually specifying the method by which the evaluation has to be administered, but we do suggest that the following – or state that the following requirements must be satisfied to keep in line with the APPM.

First of all, instructors themselves must not administer the course evaluations. Secondly, student anonymity must be maintained. Thirdly, multiple responses by individual students must be prevented. Fourth, evaluations must be conducted within the appropriate time frames specified by the APPM. Fifth, evaluations must include the quantitative and qualitative components required by the APPM. We think that in general, department secretaries could administer the evaluations. For example, if there’s an e-mail method used, the evaluation materials could be either downloaded or sent out to the students but then the responses would be returned to the department secretary from the identified e-mail address of the student and the secretary would then delete the identifying address and transfer the results to the scantron forms for Testing Services which is kind of a laborious process. An alternative approach that the department may prefer is to send out old-fashioned paper mail, send out the evaluation forms with return envelops to be sent back to the department, the envelopes being coded to prevent multiple submissions which would eliminate the secretary having to do scantron transfers but would give some upfront work with stuffing envelopes and labels and things like that and also increase costs. So, we’re not really specifying this; we’re just making suggestions that departments might prefer. I won’t go through it but we just put an example evaluation of instruction for on-line courses, which is sort of equivalent to the more formal one that was adopted for the teaching courses in the
previous meeting. This is just kind of guidelines for departments to send out. The only real necessary part of it is that the goal of the university should be stated at the front end and that the appropriate instructions should be made to the students as to how to fill the forms out properly. Usually, if this is going out to an on-line course, the evaluation form would already have the appropriate course number and instructor’s name and so on on there. So, it’s kind of a general guideline for the student evaluation of instruction.

So for all of this really, there’s just really a few statements and the only single proposed resolution is that the University Council ask Testing Services to develop a system for delivering student evaluations in on-line courses.

Okay, I’m open to questions/issues.

President Peters: All right, so the proposal before us is the long and the short-term endorsement.

C. Booth: Correct.

President Peters: One would be a referral to the Testing Center to develop a long-term method and meanwhile, departments should comply but they should use these simple guidelines. All right.

C. Booth: Correct.

W. Tolhurst: I have a suggestion. It seems to me we have technology that we all use quite a lot that might be serviceable for this purpose. I’m talking about Blackboard. If you set up a special evaluation Blackboard for each course and had it so that only the secretary had access to the control panel, you might be able to administer the evaluation through that. When students post things on the Blackboard, they’re identified and you could quickly spot double posters if there were any, and it would not require – I mean most of us or a lot of us are using this technology already and it would work for regular courses and for on-line courses. It might be something you would want the tech folk to look in to and see how hard it would be ---

President Peters: Is that short term and long term?

W. Tolhurst: I think so and you wouldn’t have to spend more money.

C. Booth: I would agree. I think that when I’ve written web servers – interactive web servers and so on, I’m really kind of including Blackboard and similar systems into that. Yeah, thank you.

President Peters: Professor Stephen?

J. Stephen: There’s also the project that Murali is working on to do on-line testing with the card readers and that might be something that we could do that way too. When you do it that way it
can automatically cross you off and randomize or anonymize your data all at once so that’s another direction to look at.

C. Booth: I don’t know whether there’s any sort of central information area where departments can access how to do this but that might something that could be kind of useful as well.

M. Spires: I wonder if I might perhaps offer a friendly amendment to your proposal in that in addition to Testing Services, I think perhaps Faculty Development should be included in the charge.

C. Booth: Okay. That sounds quite acceptable to me.

President Peters: All right. I take it there’s no action – no formal action required. We’ve received this report and then the Executive Secretary will get this to the proper people. Gip?

G. Seaver: It was mentioned about the student information system and I will take this back to the steering committee. I’m not that familiar with the modules but in talking to the project manager, the feeling was there may be a part of the faculty tools module that might be useable for this but I just have a brief conversation because Muralic had mentioned this to me. So if you’d be willing to let our office kind of keep this open as to what would be appropriate, whether it’s Testing Services or incorporation into the new student information system. Right now, we’re in the middle of the fit gap so we’ll have a little bit better idea about that and see what might be the appropriate mechanism we might be able to use whether it’s Blackboard or – we should be able to have a response by fall as to what would be the best way to go.

C. Booth: Yeah, I think that this is just saying this is out there and somebody’s got to be dealing with it and that’s who we thought would be the best people.

E. Miller: Some on-line courses have additional fees. I would want to make sure there are no fees attached for evaluation purposes or fees that could be used for whatever extra costs assuming there were costs for evaluations.

President Peters: I’m not following you.

E. Miller: Sometimes there are fees for many on line courses but it would need to be clear that no fee could be used for the evaluation of a course I would think.

President Peters: I would think that people would understand that completely but we’ll watch that. All right. It sounds like with the technology we have some potential solutions but it needs a little more long-term analysis. There may some solutions. You want a cost effective solution because doing it with the new student system may be prohibitively expensive. We’d have to write new code whereas Blackboard might. So I think I like the ideas of evaluating this.

G. Seaver: We can have a report back by fall.

President Peters: Okay. All right. Pat?
**P. Henry:** I’m not sure if this is the right time to bring this up but I know I had conversations concerning part one of your report here in terms of revised wording. Was this going to come up later Paul or could I address this issue now?

**P. Stoddard:** Unfortunately, we don’t have a large student presence here today.

**P. Henry:** Right.

**P. Stoddard:** Since this is an issue that really seems to be of specific concern to them and how their evaluations get used in, what’s the right word, the merit and promotion, in that process. As you know and as others may know, that there have been some questions called into account as to how appropriate all six of these questions were for each department and there’s some issues related to that. Obviously, we’re not going to fix anything this year, but my thought is to take another look at this next year with the students who are going to be available on Council or for the various committees to try to address some of the issues that faculty and department chairs have brought up about the nuts and bolts of the implementation of this policy. So, you know, we have some clarification here of, you know, what’s involved. I think departments could work around what exists now by doing as Dr. Booth suggested and, you know, they can devalue the things that they don’t think are particularly important. I think we’ll probably end up, since it does – looking at this again.

**P. Henry:** I think it also might be good to have, and Bill Minor was suggesting this as well, to have this addressed to the Faculty Senate as well since there ---

**P. Stoddard:** Right. Again, this is an issue that is of particular importance to the students so I don’t want to do anything that would be perceived as trying to do it without student input and so if it does goes through the Senate, then it would be a Senate and student body that looked at this.

**P. Henry:** Okay.

**President Peters:** Does that satisfy your inquiry?

**P. Henry:** Yes.

**President Peters:** I think that’s wise.

**C. Booth:** I have two quick comments. One is that I noticed in going through the sections of the APPM that this committee actually has to review the whole wording of the APPM for the undergraduate on line courses anyway next year so this issue can be kind of incorporated into that partly. Secondly, I’d also just like to thank the committee for their forbearance and their patience in dealing with this over what turned out to be a very long sort of process. Thank you.

**President Peters:** Your committee has our thanks and these things always evolve – student evaluation issues evolve. All right, do we know what we’re doing? Okay.
G. Resources, Space and Budgets Committee – Amy Rose, Chair – no report

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

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

J. Elections and Legislative Oversight Committee – Brigid Lusk, Chair – report

President Peters: Brigid, Elections and Legislative Oversight Committee.

1. University Council confirmation of election of 2006 – 2007 Executive Secretary of the University Council.

B. Lusk: As Chair of the Elections and Legislative Oversight Committee, I would like to move to confirm the election of Paul Stoddard as Executive Secretary of the University Council.

President Peters: Is there a second? Discussion? All those in favor say aye. Opposed? Abstain? Congratulations. You’re hereby sentenced to 365 days of hard labor as Executive Secretary. Thank you for your good work.

VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

President Peters: Any unfinished business? I have some finished business and that is this is Dean Art Young’s last Council meeting before retirement. Dean Young. Thank you. Do we have any other members that are retiring from the university? At least who will admit to it. I know this is bittersweet for Dean Young and it’s bittersweet for a couple of reasons. The other is this is the one year anniversary of the death of his very, very good friend and our colleague, Dean Fred Kitterle and I know that’s a bitter sweet memory for you and thank you for your service.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

President Peters: Is there any new business before the Council? Yes, Pat?

P. Henry: Actually, this is more comment and question.

X. COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

President Peters: All right, we can slip into those.

P. Henry: This is sort of just a parting ray of sunshine but listening to the news this morning and discussion of the possible preparations for avian flu, I just wondered if NIU is involved in a planning process in terms of the state or the country or whatever.

President Peters: I can comment on that and the answer is absolutely. There’s levels of – we have been working very, very hard on our total preparedness for all sorts of disasters and our
attention has turned to pandemics and the level of planning is intense on our campus and it correlates well with our community health people. I have to say our relations with our community health people are very good and also they appreciate us because of the resources we bring to bare. History has informed us at NIU, my reading on the history and actually, Barbara Peters telling me about the history of NIU, is that the big issue at the turn of the century was not the flu academic here but it was cholera, two episodes of cholera epidemic and the best thing to do is, if you get it, you lock people down and so if you get it in a residence hall, everybody stays there which means you’ve got to plan for clean water and food and all of that. The second level of planning is occurring at the level of the IBHE and then the state and the presidents – the public chancellors and presidents have talked about this twice this year – to coordinate this if in case the breakouts are regionalized. So let’s say the breakout is in Carbondale and we’re okay, maybe we can move in and help them with support so there is an interaction going on and I know at the federal level there is also some planning. Will it be up to the task? I hope so, but I’m not sure. Dr. Williams is sort of leading the effort. Is there anything you want to add to it, but everyone is involved, quietly, efficiently, you know, every aspect of it. How do we communicate, how do we use the internet and it is complex and we’re also working toward a written plan as well and the answer is yes and I take it seriously because I do believe here will be an avian flu epidemic of some magnitude at some point in the near term.

E. Williams: I would only add to what the President said that it is the intention, communication is the key, and once plans and strategies have been sort of worked through and worked out and coordinated with the local health departments and health services as well as state and so forth, there will be an immense effort to communicate what the plans are so that they can be fine tuned as well as leave us with an informed campus so people will know what will happen, what to do, where to go and so forth as the matter unfolds.

P. Henry: Good.

President Peters: And quick communication is critical. People have to know what they might expect and then communication has to be rapid so if you happen to be a professor living in Batavia and something happens here, you’re probably going to get a call, an e-mail, something that says stay home.

P. Henry: You don’t want people moving around and think of our campus for a moment – a commuter campus – think about that for a moment. So, it is a juicy problem of organization and let’s hope that we never have to put any of it in place. Okay, more comments? Yeah?

J. Stephen: I have two comments. When we were first starting the provost search I questioned the need for and the expense for such a search firm. After this being done and having my private concerns of whether you could actually get it done in this amount of time, I think that it was an excellent idea and I believe that at least one of the candidates I know of would not have come on to campus without this search firm so I think it was a good idea. Second thing, I would like to remind all of you who actually communicate with the faculty in your departments or colleges that, in my personal opinion, one of the most underused medical benefits that we get is the flexible spending account or MedCap. If you have people with a highly predictable medical cost, they always meet their deductible, they want to buy new glasses next year, they need a
route canal or whatever, using the flexible spending account can actually extend your money about 20% so it’s a nice time to send out a reminder for people to get involved in that. I write one. If you want me to send you a copy of what I write and why people would want to be interested in it, stop buy and give me your e-mail address and I’ll send it to you by the end of the week.

**President Peters:** There’s a lot of confusion about that and there’s a lot of benefits that go unused.

**J. Stephen:** If you have a lot of expenses coming up, it can save you hundreds and hundreds of dollars.

**President Peters:** Thank you Buck.

**L. Kamenitsa:** You have mentioned here before and I have asked subsequently about the possibility of providing some sort of shuttle service to the newly opened Metro station at Elburn which could service people who lives in western suburbs and downtown Chicago and I haven’t heard much happening. In fact, my spouse recently googled NIU and Metro and Elburn and came up with my comments to the University Council about this.

**President Peters:** Was your image there too?

**L. Kamenitsa:** No, it wasn’t. Anyhow, I’m just wondering what the status was. The last time I spoke to Huskie Bus they seemed to have no knowledge of this and mentioned only their weekend service to Geneva.

**President Peters:** That’s a good question. First of all, most of the Council knows this; I don’t know if the larger community knows this, the Huskie Bus Line is a student affairs activity in its entirety. They are the ones, with our guidance would you say, our support and our watchful eye, they are the ones who pay for, through their fees, and negotiate, with the approval of the Trustees, the service. They set standards, they set the routes, they do the bargaining. They are interested, the students, are interested in the shuttle to Elburn and it is my understanding that they are in negotiations. Now, that’s one thing and we have no representatives here who could speak to that but there’s a negotiation that has to – again, it’s like any other business proposition. Currently, I believe we do have shuttle service to Geneva, which was the end of the line service and that service was a Friday-Sunday service because that’s where the need was. Whether they’ve analyzed that or not, I don’t know. Now, there’s another thing going and I have a seat on the city’s ???, Metropolitan Transportation Committee and, as a community now, not as a university, this is an issue in DeKalb county as well and there are several strategies that I think they are pursuing. One is to buy a piece of the Huskie line to give service to non-university people, particularly non-students and I think probably the issue there is what is the cost, will it be a fare based thing and what would the schedule be. Would it be Friday-Sunday or be more. That’s a community issue so those of you who live in DeKalb County may want to bring that to the attention of your public officials. I think maybe TransVac and Pace is also involved. Now, I’ve been out to Elburn – has anybody been out to Elburn. It’s not quite ready for prime time out there, you know. Don’t take your new sports car out there, you know, but they’re going to get
there and that’s going to be the end of the line and my guess is that come fall, the students will have figured something out and then through time, I think that will be improved because if these gas prices hold, more and more people will be clamoring for public transportation. The other option, I have two bicycles I haven’t ridden in six years that I can lend someone. That is everything that I know based upon an analysis this afternoon and I’m interested in the same issue. I’ll keep using whatever influence I have to get it done. The students know what they’re doing; they’re doing okay. Anybody want to add anything to that? Eddie? Brian? More questions, comments?

XI. 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

XII. ADJOURNMENT

President Peters: Motion to adjourn? Don’t forget, 5:00 it’s time for celebration at the President’s residence. Don’t park on the neighbors’ lawns because then I’ve got to reseed them. Motion to adjourn? All in favor? We’re adjourned for another year.

The meeting adjourned at 4:17 p.m.