UNIVERSITY COUNCIL TRANSCRIPT
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 24, 2007, 3:00 P.M.
HOLMES STUDENT CENTER SKY ROOM

PRESENT: Alden, Bose, Butler, Cesarek, Derscheid, Dick, Docking, Elish-Piper, Gallagher, Giles, Grall, Hemphill, Kafer, Kolb, Kowalski, Latham, Lusk, Marcus, Meyer, Mogren, Munroe, Newman-Ryan, Novotney, Pierce, Richmond, Ridnour, Seaver, Sido, Smith, S. Song, Stephen, Tolhurst, Tollerud, Vohra, Wade

M. Morris attended for L. Pernell; L. Jennings attended for S. Clayton.

Parliamentarian Ferald Bryan was present.

ABSENT: Dowen, Grush, Hamlet, Johns, Kaplan, King, Langguth, Newman, Oreseanin, Pappanduros, Parisot, B. Peters, Purnell, Schoenbachler, Sims, X. Song, Sorensen, Stravers, Thu, Walton, Williams, Wolfskill

I. CALL TO ORDER

President Peters: We call the January 24, 2007 meeting of the University Council to order.

The meeting was called to order at 3:06 P.M.

II. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

President Peters: We have no walk-in’s but a change in the reports under VI, Faculty Advisory Committee to IBHE. Jody Newman-Ryan is going to give that report if I understand that correctly. Is that right Jody?


President Peters: Okay. Therefore, a motion to adopt the agenda as printed? Is there a second? All those in favor say aye. Okay, we have an agenda.

The agenda was approved as written.

III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 6, 2006 MEETING
(Pages 3-6)

President Peters: Approval of the minutes of December 6 on pages 3, 4, 5, and 6. Why don’t you take a minute there and I’ll call for any additions or corrections. Hearing none, motion to approve? Second? All those in favor say aye. All right, we have approval of the minutes.

The minutes were approved as written.
IV. PRESIDENT’S ANNOUNCEMENTS

President Peters: I walked out of the office without my folder so I’m doing my announcements off the top of my head which is pretty dangerous.

It’s the first meeting of the semester and I thought I’d give you just a little bit of the landscape on changes and anticipations in Springfield and a little bit in Washington and Ray Alden is here today and he’s going to, at my request, give us an update on how strategic planning is going which is a very, very important activity and I’m very, very pleased with what’s going on. I deliberately kind of stayed away from the meetings but I’ve heard an awfully lot and stay in pretty close contact with Ray on it and others so I happen to think it’s one of the most important things we’re going to be doing in the next year or so. It’s going to set the academic course for the institution and I’m very pleased that we’re at a point where we can really sit down and have a good discussion and I’m really pleased that we’re doing that.

The situation in Springfield and I suppose this comes under the heading – because Springfield always has to do with – what are they going to do for us and what are they going to do to us and what can we do to help on both of those. It’s quite a bit up in the air at this point in terms of timing and process and I think it’s important to know that because for a good number of weeks now we’re not going to really hear much of anything although that doesn’t mean there won’t be activity. The Governor was re-elected and was some considerable changes in both the House and the Senate in terms of members to the point where the dynamic, the underlying dynamic, has changed with obviously Democrats in control of both chambers and all constitutional offices. From our point of view, you know, obviously what happens in the Governor’s budget is important and what happens in the Legislature is important. I think there are some over-riding factors that constrain the budget development as it relates to higher education and those are always there and one is what do the revenue estimates look like in the state? What does the overall economic health of the state look like? What are the state obligations and what are the interests and the policy interests of the Governor and what can we expect? Most of you are very involved people and you kind of read the news reports as I do and just to kind of simply this whole thing, you know, revenue is coming in. It is not coming in at the rate that they thought but it’s still an increase and the projections are that the economy won’t cool but it’s not taking off but we still are generating revenue so that’s good. It’s not going to generate enough revenue, however, to cover obligations that will be rolling into the state budget this year and in the next fiscal years.

As the second part of this analysis, the long-term economic health of the state government and the programs that are funded by the state, if you’ve been reading either news reports – there have been a couple of – one independent report on this from the Chicago Commercial Club and the government agencies like the Fiscal Forecasting Group, it’s not good. There are obligations that make it look like the state is in about a trillion dollar, a trillion dollar problem. A lot of it is unpaid pension obligations, the rising costs of health care and other things were the revenue doesn’t balance so in the next several years, this has to be taken care of. So that’s kind of like, you know, this dark cloud that’s over there so as much as we watch it and we’re involved in it on a day-to-day basis, the state does have to come to grips with the pension issue. Does that mean
they raise taxes to pay the, you know, what is needed? Does it mean that benefits for new employees are constricted? Hopefully, it doesn’t get any worse than that but it could. Is there a commitment to continuing benefits? So, it’s the kind of thing that’s on everybody’s mind but people are not really talking about it all that openly at this point but you know you’re going to hear conversations about that in the next years – in a couple of years or so – and we’re going to stay involved in that and our Annuitants Association is going to stay involved in that.

All right, so that’s, you know, sort of the macro-level picture. Getting down to putting brass tacks and putting a budget together, the Governor, Governor Blagojevich, has asked for and received the assent of the General Assembly to deliver – to push back his budget message to March 7. Okay, so that means usually by March 7, we will have already been given instructions, we would have known what was in the Governor’s budget, we would have been preparing for appropriation hearings to react one way or the other and if the Governor’s message is March 7, my guess is appropriation hearings won’t get rolling until after spring break, if then. All right, usually at this time, the Illinois Higher Board of Education has prepared a budget on behalf of the universities and moved it to the Governor’s Office for consideration. Those discussions have been pushed back for a number of reasons but for one reason is that the Director of the Budget, Office of Budget and Management, John Filan, has moved up to a different position in the Blagojevich administration, it’s Chief Operation Officer, although in his portfolio, it’s the budget so he’ll keep his hand on that and Ginger Ostro, who last year was the budget official in the OMB and whose portfolio was higher education so she knows higher education. She’s now the new Director and I think she used to be the Government Relations or the budget person for Governor’s State. We know her very well; she’s a very knowledgeable professional. So, the budget is being put together as we speak and there are negotiations that are going on, presumably between OMB and the IBHE and the presidents of the universities have been involved in that and there have been kind of continual meetings.

Now let me talk a little bit about the priorities of the Governor as they might emerge or the state and where higher education fits into that. I’ve talked about this many times and it hasn’t changed much. Obviously, I’ve mentioned some of the top priorities; the need to get to a balanced budget and to take care of some of these big ticket items. Medicaid, the health issue, the Governor wants to extend health care coverage from all kids to all people. You know if you read, all across the country this is happening. Governor Schwarzenegger in California has a proposal and sometimes there’s a revenue stream hooked to it; sometimes there’s a corporate responsibility obligation but that is to be worked out here. Obviously, K-12 financing is a huge top priority for the Governor – the Governor calls it education and we’ve been arguing – that is all the presidents of the public universities – have been arguing not to decouple or at least to consider under the rubric of education, higher education, post-secondary education. Hopefully, we’ll be successful in that but right now I think K-12 education is getting all of the attention because of the funding crisis that they have. There are other issues that are important to the state; obviously state of the economy, economic development, you know, creation of jobs, early learning and then, about number five on that macro list, is higher education but that gets you right below the radar screen in terms of new funding or substantial new funding. So we’re trying to make the case that we ought to be lifted. So to be determined – I think we’ll know a lot more about what the Governor has in store for his budget on March 7 and I read somewhere this morning that the Governor, as he has done once in the past, is going to combine his State of the
State Address with his budget message and that’s March 7. It’s our expectation that we have lobbied for and made the case and IBHE has made the case for a base increase in our GR and remember last year was the first time in what, two or three or four years, that we had received a, you know, depending on how you count, about a 1% increase, 1%+ increase in base. That’s important to us because even though we’ve been diversified, our sources of revenue, the state base is still very, very important to us and it gives us the ability to take care of salary increases among other things - new programmatic thrusts, the rising costs of utilities and those sorts of things and increasing the base is very, very important and has a direct impact on the relationship between tuition rates. Remember, last time I passed out that graphic that showed that in state after state, if you take a national level perspective, there’s a direct reciprocal relationship between the rise in tuition and the decline in state support. The cost of higher education hasn’t increased all that much relative to the CPI or other valuable commodities. What has changed is the way it’s paid and there’s been a shift, unfortunate I think, away from state government toward students and their parents. I think that’s not good. In all the federal legislation there’s talk about cost containment but there’s never a recognition that the direct reason for the result in tuition increases has been decreases in state spending.

So these are the kind of arguments that are going to go forward. Let me talk a little bit about the capital bill. We’ve not had a capital bill in four years now. That doesn’t mean we haven’t built things and, you know, we build things by rising private funding and using our auxiliary income to build things but we haven’t had capital bills out of the state in four years except for some marginal dollars here and there. Most people are, I hate to use the word optimistic, but they’re expectant. They have an expectation that this may be the year that there is a major capital bill. By capital we mean building buildings and providing for deferred maintenance and infrastructure. Not small projects but fairly large projects like Stevens Hall which has been on the top of our list now for seven, eight, nine – ten years and all the priorities of Illinois higher education has been in lockstep for the last four years. New things happen but we haven’t added much new because we haven’t cleared the old priorities and we have to be consistent. Stevens Hall is our top priority. There will be a capital bill that the Governor will propose but because of the requirements for balanced budget, the Governor will have to identify a revenue stream that will pay for that capital. I mean, that’s four years of pent up demand across the whole state; that’s huge. I mean this is not a few million dollars. The capital bill when it does come will be quite large and, of course, there’s no lack of good projects across the state to fund. Roads, bridges, infrastructure, you name it, you know, academic buildings, prisons, you know, whatever. There are a lot of buildings there. So right now, the issue is how do you pay for it and that will be the focus of some very, very interesting politics and who can predict. The latest attempt to find a revenue source is to perhaps sell the lottery and the thinking there, as I understand it and you know I’m not an economist, but is that the lotteries internationally are becoming supersaturated because everybody is getting into it and there are international internet lotteries and the revenue from lotteries at large is flattening out. This is the argument. Therefore, why not sell the asset when it’s at its peak and then get, I don’t know, 15 billion dollars and then put that 15 billion dollars which would be one time, into building. Okay? Of course, you’ve given up the asset so, you know, I can see some of you laughing because – but that is one idea. Is that going to be the one they choose? I don’t know – you gonna sell the toll roads? That’s another one.
???: Can we sell the legislature?

President Peters: You know it’s kind of funny. Dr. Williams couldn’t be here today; he’s on a mission of mercy for me, but he suggested that maybe we ought to buy a piece of that lottery. Take up a collection and buy a piece of the lottery. Anyway, I gave him the last $20 I had left over from the holidays and said “buy a number”. No, I don’t happen to – my personal belief is I don’t think that’s a good way of financing anything because of who buys lottery tickets, but that isn’t my call. What our call is to make the best case we can for the terrible situation we have in Stevens Hall and other buildings that we need to get fixed and I think it’s the state’s responsibility to do it. So, you know, I’m going to make that case. Now there is – the votes are there to probably pass a tax increase on the Senate Democratic side there’s a super majority – but this is getting very, very complex and so I think we’ll have a capital bill. If not this year then next year. I’m not going to say it’s a one-shot deal for four years. We’re going to do our very, very best and will asking some of you to help out to make the case and hopefully, that bill will be large enough to include some of our projects and some of our deferred maintenance.

All that being said, here’s the frustrating part for those of us who are here, those of us who have to put budgets together and make rational decisions, fiscal and economic decisions, we probably won’t know what our budget is – given all of that – there is no one in Springfield who would bet that the legislative session would end on time. This is going to go at least through May/June. So, given that, commencement will come and go; we will start our summer routine and yet we will not have a signal as to what our budget will be that is solid enough, God forbid, to make decisions about salaries and, you know, all the things that we have to put into our budget. So I’ll keep you informed as this situation unfolds and sometimes it won’t be worth reporting because today’s reporting will be changed by tomorrow’s events but I’ll let you know and we’re going to have some options and we’re going to do some planning but I would say I’m optimistic there will be some increase in our base, not near enough, but we want to guard against being zeroed out and I’m hopeful that there will be a capital bill. On the capital bill I’m more optimistic that it will happen; I’m not sure if it will happen in this session or the veto session and, you know, it’s just too early to tell right now. I thought I wouldn’t be spending as much time in Springfield – you’d think I’d get it right after seven years – but the problem is it’s like professor, I’m speaking to the professors now, you know, the new crop of freshmen coming in and you’d think you’d get this course stuff down but you’ve got to start all over again don’t you? Well, I’ve got to start all over again and I’m looking forward to it actually. There’s some good people coming in; I’ve got some renewed energy to make our case because we have a good case to be made. I’ve already been down meeting some really nice, nice new people and they’re concerned about education and they want to do good. I may be calling upon many of you; I know I will, to help make the case.

Washington, I won’t say too much about but I’m off tomorrow to Washington and then I have to spend time in Washington because there’s also a new cast of characters that we need to talk about. Our focus there is a little more on the macro level things like student loan forgiveness. We may get a higher education reauthorization but I think we’re going to be spending a lot of time in the regulatory arena explaining why tuition and costs have gone up. There’s a lot of time. The committees are all reconstituted and so we’ve got to do some reconnecting there. So I begin that process at 6:00am tomorrow. So I’ll be spending a lot of time doing both of those
things on your behalf and I'm going to need your support and your help and I'll keep you informed. I hope at the end of this, we get a project like Stevens and we get some increase in our base so we can continue doing what we've done so well for over 100 years.

Okay, while that's going on, Dr. Alden is running the university and we're planning. Ray, would you talk to us a little about where you are strategically?

Provost Alden: Sure. We have had I think it's now three major strategic planning meetings of the Task Force and one major roundtable. Just to go back on what has been accomplished, we're surprisingly on the timeline that we established early on. The attendance at the meetings has been surprisingly high. I think we invited 110 people to the roundtable and 108 showed up. I can't ask for better than that and we have gone through the process of debating about what the major goals, what things are unique about the university, what things we want to preserve, what things do we want to change in going forward. We came up with a number of what the consultants are calling "targets", I guess some people call them goals as well as a mission statement of which there were three versions and we're still working on which version or which combination of versions we'll end up with. The roundtable provided the opportunity to get some new sets of eyes on it. We had the 45 people from the Task Force plus more than that number over again in the 108 people, who participated, broke into three different groups lead by independent facilitators and I kind of floated between the groups. I heard much of the same sort of information being exchanged, a lot of the comments the same and, in fact, when the document came back to the Task Force that kind of started narrowing it down, what was the consensus of this roundtable, they found that the three groups reached similar ideas somewhere further ahead than others but at least they provided the Task Force with some good ideas. This week we will form the work groups. I've already asked some key individuals to chair those work groups and by next week we will have the tasks for those work groups and by sometime early in February those groups will be meeting on a weekly basis. The chairs will be meeting with me on a weekly basis to kind of make sure that we're comparing notes and cross-talking across the groups. The roundtable will come out again. The same people will be brought into the same sort of a venue to look at what the work groups have done sometime later in April so the fact that the work groups are working alone, they're not the end all and be all of making decisions. There will be opportunities for the university community to have input and, quite frankly, we will be using the web a lot. Initially with the task groups, they'll be in kind of a working mode on the websites that will be shared between the work groups and then eventually it will be on the university website as the work groups feel that their draft working documents are ready for wider distribution and review. So I would see the months of February, March and April being extremely busy. By May we want to have this pretty much ready to go and then we should be able to have documents being reviewed by various constituencies in that timeline. So that's where we are on that.

President Peters: Good. Usually we wait for questions but I think this is a good time.

J. Stephen: I put my hand up because my question is for Provost Alden. When you talked about the mission statement, do you mean a new mission statement for the university or mission statement for the Strategic Planning?
**Provost Alden:** Well, I say it’s a mission statement. It’s what the consultants are calling “the big goal” with all these others being targets and strategic initiatives on how you reach the targets. So they’re not using that term but if you look at those goals that were distributed to the roundtable, they could be part of a mission statement so that was kind of put on hold until the work groups start coming back with some of their strategic initiatives and it will be something that the Task Force has to address. I’m not sure they’re talking about rewriting all two and a half to three pages of mission statement that we have now, it’s more of an abbreviated synopsis – this is what we’re going to try and achieve in the long run with this strategic plan. So I guess calling it a strategic goal is not that far off.

**J. Stephen:** Okay, and a second question, has the question of advertising come up because I’m rather an insomniac. I sleep from like 8:00 to 1:00 in the morning and then I’m up until about 4:00 and then I get up at 7:00 or 8:00. In the middle of the night, you know, you get ITT, well Phoenix and junk mail, but a new one that’s advertising on TV which I think has a marvelous name seeing as I’m a Doonesbury fan, is Walden University, is there any plan for considering advertising in the Chicago area or is that something we just simply can’t afford?

**Provost Alden:** I think as far as the strategic plan goes what I see at the end of this process this year would be what I’ve been telling the Strategic Planning Task Force as just the beginning of the process. I think at that time we go to the colleges and departments and other units on campus and say okay, here are some of the big picture targets that we want to accomplish here or some of the strategic approaches that we would like to take. Come up with your own priorities based on supporting those areas as well as developing your own targets. So I would see marketing and recruitment and all of that as being an outgrowth of a strategic plan but it wouldn’t necessarily be a target on the strategic plan so – and of course, that has to do also with the capital campaign and all the various things the President’s Office does. So I would hesitate to say at the end of this, we will have a target being marketing. It’s a tool that will be used for a number of things I think.

**J. Stephen:** Thank you sir.

**President Peters:** That’s an interesting question. It depends on what you mean. The university, us, literally spends millions of dollars on marketing and advertising. It’s hard to get a handle on it and it’s hard to assess what impact it has. Yeah, then there is – when you talk about marketing, are you talking about central marketing, are you talking about – the MBA program probably spends upwards of a half a million dollars a year advertising on radio and for target marketing. We’ve been pretty lucky that in terms of global marketing, except for branding, you know, where you want to get your brand out there, that we’ve been blessed demographically, that we didn’t really have to advertise to get students the way some institutions do because we’re good, we’re affordable and we’re available but, at the end of our strategic academic visioning when we take a look at what comes out of that and after several years of trying to define NIU – NIU is a very difficult institution to brand because it’s many things. It’s very complex; it’s almost unique. After a real – I’ve been doing an analysis of our marketing and some of it’s armchair and some of it is everyday in my office, stuff crosses my desk from internal audiences and I’ve started to throw all that stuff in boxes and I need to build a new building now, you know, whether it’s unit, department, college, two individuals, vice-president – and then map that back to a set of resources. Is there a budget line? Is it a vacant salary savings? Is it a GA? Then
the most important marketing tool which we have been making some progress on and need to is
the web and blogs and all of that. We’re looking at that. Look at the proliferation of those
within the university and then at the end of our visioning progress, I think we have to take back
and say okay, what are the central messages we need to get out there to mass audiences and those
ought to have a look and a feel and a taste.

J. Stephen: One of the things that concerns me most is that it appears that, I think it’s Robert
Morris, I might be wrong – there is some concentrated advertising targeting our population of
education students and right now I think we produce the majority of the secondary education
specialists north of I-80 and I think that it’s Robert Morris that’s advertising too ??.

President Peters: Yeah, you’re thinking along the – the way I’ve been nervous about this – we
went through a period of budget downturns. We, I never could bring myself to make the step
function investment you need to have a first rate marketing program but after we do our
visioning we are going into an academic capital campaign. We need to advertise; we need to
brand better. I didn’t want to expend the kind of resources that others do for professionally, no –
Madison Avenue produced spots on football, you know, Bulls – that is non-trivial. I just didn’t
feel we could make that expenditure but I think we’re going to have to do some of that that
makes sense. You know, we’re in the third largest media market in the world and it’s expensive
to do that. What I need is a signal from the community that they want us to get involved in that
and then I will move forward. I haven’t had that signal until recently.

J. Stephen: I have a weird idea for branding. If you become a teacher here give every new
teacher who leaves here a beautiful leather briefcase with the NIU loco on it so that every time
they walk into the classroom or into their school, their students see NIU on their briefcase.

President Peters: That’s good. Of course Buck and I both were sentenced to several years at
the University of Nebraska. Do you remember something more fundamental? The big red
guarantee. The big red guarantee was that if a graduate of the University of Nebraska went out
into the labor force and couldn’t write or calculate, we would recall our defective work and
replace it. I’m making fun of it but, all right, thank you for the comment. Do you want to
comment on your searches?

Provost Alden: We’ve got two dean searches going on; the Dean of Liberal Arts and Sciences
and the Dean of Libraries. The Dean of Liberal Arts and Sciences, we are well alone the way
because the deadline for that for first consideration was mid-January. The Dean of Libraries it’s
mid-February so we’re kind of going in sequence. Liberal Arts and Sciences we have an outside
consulting search firm helping us with that and they are pretty much on their timeline. First of
February we as a search committee go over all the top candidates, their records, and then in mid,
well the 12th or 13th of February, we determine who comes in for an airport interview. The
airport interviews are at the end of February. We would hope campus interviews would begin
mid-March so that’s the timeline on that. The Dean of the Libraries, like I said, the deadline was
February 15. They had a major national library association meeting a few weeks ago and Mary
Munroe and some of her staff went to it and we offered the people who had applied to talk to
them and I haven’t heard how many showed up but we do not expect all the candidates to really
apply until just before the deadline because that’s what typically happens with this level
positions. We will determine shortly after the 15th whether we will have an airport interview or just select a short list to come for a campus interview but if we should come up with an idea that we need airport interview, the search committee will come up with questions and a timeline. I would expect it would probably be early March just to give time to get the candidates in but one way or another I would expect March to be the active period for campus interviews for both the deans.

President Peters: Okay, any questions on that? Okay good. If I hear no other questions, let’s move through our agenda. Oh yeah, Buck, go ahead.

J. Stephen: On the Stevens Hall Annex, I think that’s been a top priority the total 19 years I’ve been here or something like that and it’s almost doubled. Isn’t it close to like 20 million now or something like that?

President Peters: Twenty – Eddie’s not here; I think it’s 23 million. Dean Kafer is it 23.4 million?

H. Kafer: It’s over 20 million but I can’t remember exactly.

President Peters: Yeah and about 70% of that is structural.

J. Stephen: Now I hate to be facetious but we did make a facetious comment last semester about running after buildings to name people after. There’s a state law that says we can’t rename that isn’t there?

President Peters: To rename what?

J. Stephen: Stevens Hall?

President Peters: I don’t know of any ---

J. Stephen: I mean if you could rename it and we don’t get a capital budget that might be a way to get some funding for it.

President Peters: Are you willing to make a contribution?

J. Stephen: I have about $38 in my pocket right now; I got a raise last month.

P. Stoddard: It changed ???.

J. Stephen: No, I was just wondering about the possibility of private funding to help with Stevens.

President Peters: We’re working on every strategy we can – if you have an idea – just generically about capital budgets and the capital list, it is extremely important in a situation like that where you have a list with the state, that you stick to your knitting. You know, there may be
another project that would capture the fascination of the Governor or a leader but you must stick to your knitting and that is our priority. Take a trip through there and – we had some people yesterday who are going to help us view us and I didn’t hear this but I understand that there was an impromptu play put on by the theatre majors when a couple of these gentlemen asked them what is it like to live and work in Stevens and our majors put on an impromptu kind of Saturday Night skit. That was as effective as anything I’ve done in seven years; crying, moaning, groaning, whining but, you know, so I don’t – the answer is, is there a rainmaker out there?

J. Stephen: I think I’d like to withdraw that suggestion coming to think that if we’re successful then the Governor might say hey, capital improvements, you need new carpeting, get a sponsor, so maybe that’s a bad idea.

President Peters: Okay, all right. Can we move on now?

V. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Change in Bylaw 7.2 – see memo from Raymond Alden, III – Refer to Rules and Governance (Pages 7-12)

President Peters: I’m going to call now for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Second? Any discussion? There’s one item there. All those in favor say aye.

The motion passed.

VI. REPORTS FROM COUNCILS, BOARDS, AND STANDING COMMITTEES

A. FAC to IBHE – Paul Stoddard – no report

President Peters: Let’s move into reports and Jody has a report from the Faculty Advisory Committee to the IBHE.

J. Newman-Ryan: Is it on? Okay. Thank you. I’m sorry you don’t have it in your packet. The meeting was just last Friday so I’ll just give a brief summary and you should get a written report at the next meeting.

The meeting was last Friday, the 19 of January at Northeastern Illinois University in Chicago. We were addressed by Dr. ??? and I’m sorry if that’s not how you pronounce her name. She’s the President of Northeastern. She opened her discussion by talking about two concerns that she has with the Illinois Board of Higher Ed and, in brief, those are basically 1), that it fails to acknowledge a wide array of higher education missions. She thinks it’s too rigid in its goals and 2), it’s also too rigid in time to degree formulas. She feels that those discriminate against some universities, particularly hers, and their students and so she talked about the number of, the large number of Northeastern students who come from underrepresented groups and that they take as a whole, longer to graduate and she’s urging us – maybe we have that here – I’m not sure, but she’s urging universities to acquire data to actually sort of address some of these questions about whether there are actual problems in taking six or seven years to finish instead of a shorter
amount of time. Along those lines, we were also addressed by Dr. Maureen Gillette who’s the Dean of the College of Ed at Northeastern and she talked about collecting data to try to look at student satisfaction and employer satisfaction about these students who take longer to finish their degree.

Then we were addressed by two individuals who didn’t want to identify themselves for quite some time. Every side in their presentation said “not for distribution” and the handouts said “not for distribution” so I’m not sure what I can tell you but in brief, ---

President Peters: Did you sign anything?

J. Newman-Ryan: No, I didn’t sign anything. In brief and as mentioned by President Peters, K-12 funding is a hot topic so I’m not sure whether this organization is trying to get the Governor’s ear before the State of the Address and that’s why it’s so secretive or – I’m not sure. We were told, sort of vaguely, that the group is comprised of education leaders, business leaders and concerned citizens. Some of them have been in high positions at the state level we’re told, although no details were given, and they want to well, they start out by talking about Illinois’s poor standard and a variety of achievement gaps for primary and secondary education. For instance, large discrepancies in reading scores between poor and non-poor students for example and I have page after page of those kinds of discrepancies and Illinois scores very poorly compared to other states. So their solution for that as well as some other ills as they see it in the education system, mostly K-12, but again as we’ve heard many of these also apply to us on some level. Their solution is two-fold. Basically, they want to increase taxes, excuse me, increase revenues, can’t say the tax word, so they have a complete change in revenue structure that they want to propose to the Governor and then two, they want to talk about strengthening teacher preparation and professional development for teachers. So most of the talk was in regard to increasing revenue and they looked at four states that apparently collect revenue in a certain way and they want to propose this to the Governor so I’m not sure what else I can say to you. We’re told that at the next meeting, February 23, we’ll have more information or maybe this will come out in the Governor’s address. I don’t know. What they proposed actually to me, not being an economist, sounded better than the lottery and the toll road proposals but I’m not sure. I don’t have any details for you and maybe we’ll hear this in the news. I’m not sure.

Lastly, there was one report from one faculty member saying that at his university there’s a concern by faculty who were told that they failed the State of Illinois Ethics Test because they completed it in less than the required time so they are concerned that there could be repercussions for salary and promotion considerations and the group decided not to do anything about this yet and to monitor the situation. Last Friday I didn’t know if that was a problem here but we have breaking news along those lines I guess. With that, I will turn it back to Paul.

P. Stoddard: I know a little bit about the ethics situation. The state feels if you take the test too quickly you must have cheated which apparently would be unethical and therefore you could not possibly have passed it. They’re afraid that people just read ahead to the questions and answer them and therefore don’t get the actual training. We see this and faculty and students I’m sure see this and staff as well, if you know the answers, why do you have to read the chapter but that’s not how the state views it and therefore if you did finish the exam in something under 10
minutes or so, you’ll get a nasty letter from the state saying that you are not in compliance with
the State’s Ethics Act and you’ll get a nice big packet of information and you’ll have to sign a
form saying that you were not in compliance and unless you fail to submit this form, nothing
goes into your personnel file, no negative repercussions will happen unless you fail to admit that
you did not comply with the ethics test. That’s my understanding of it.

**J. Stephen:** I took it and I got – usually these things are just straight forward but I remember it
was question #8 ---

**P. Stoddard:** You’re not allowed to say.

**J. Stephen:** I don’t remember what it said but it was one of the most ambiguous statements that
I can recall ever reading and I got that wrong so I had to retake it. I got a crossword puzzle done
while I was retaking it. It doesn’t interactively tell you whether you failed because you took it
too fast?

**P. Stoddard:** No.

**J. Stephen:** So when can we expect these letters.

**P. Stoddard:** Any day now.

**J. Stephen:** Because I went through – the second time I had to retake it because I only got 90%.
The second time I went through faster.

**P. Stoddard:** I’m not sure how that shows up on there.

**President Peters:** I can’t make this rational so ---

**J. Stephen:** Notice the pronunciation; rational, not rationale.

**President Peters:** But we’ve got a state law which has given authority to an agency to
implement. The agency has implemented. They’ve determined by whatever process that 10% of
the employees across the state, right Steve Cunningham – 10% of the thousands and thousand
and hundreds of thousands of employees across the state did not complete the ethics test in a way
that was acceptable to the state standard to wit you had to spend a little time reading this stuff I
guess and then they set a time limit – I think it was 10 minutes, that you had to spend at least 10
minutes taking the test. There’s a lot of talk going on right now; a lot of discussion about this
and trying to get the common sense core of this and so you’ll have to stay tuned. But yes, it is a
fact that letters have been going out to various state agencies that have identified a list of
individuals or they have identified individuals who have taken less than 10 minutes.

**J. Stephen:** Well, what about reading speeds? I guess next year I’ll just take my glasses off.

**President Peters:** Like I said, I can’t make this rational. Steve or Deb do you want to add
anything to this?
**D. Haliczer:** Hello. The letters went out in the mail today to all of the people who failed to satisfy the state’s requirement. President Peters got a list of 677 names here at Northern who didn’t do it in enough time.

**President Peters:** I just looked for my name and I wasn’t on there so – you know how you used to look on the grade lists on the door of the professors.

**D. Haliczer:** The keeper of the statistics does say that President Peters is okay so you’re okay John. The letters went out to about 600 people today and so they’ll be getting to peoples’ mailboxes today and tomorrow and they have to read the extensive packet and sign the form which is called “Ethics Orientation for Non-Compliant Employees”. We have officially objected to the terminology because we feel these people were compliant because they did it; they took the ethics training and took the quiz and passed it. It’s just the time problem. The bulk of the people involved were students and graduate assistants and extra-help people although we had about 134 status employees who were in the group and my phone is ringing off the hook with people complaining about attitude and the way we’re treating people and I’m encouraging everyone to just call me and talk to me about it.

**President Peters:** God bless you!

**D. Haliczer:** Yeah right. Brownie points in heaven maybe?

**President Peters:** It isn’t our fault.

**D. Haliczer:** We put our own letter on this. We had to send the state’s letter and the packet. We put our own letter which we composed which assures people that they’re not being disciplined at all for this. The only discipline is if they fail to turn that letter in and then President Peters and Ken Davidson have been told that we will be disciplining people and that is another discussion.

**President Peters:** NIU is ethical. NIU’s people are ethical. NIU is committed to following state law to take the ethics test and we’re committed to work with those people who are implementing it to come up with reasonable ways of determining whether people are in compliance or not. That’s my statement.

**D. Haliczer:** Don’t let people be too worried about this. Just do the form, send it back, get it done. Thank you.

**President Peters:** Yeah, Brigid?

**B. Lusk:** I was reading about some people who did get those letters and were foreign nationals and were very concerned signing this form would put them in trouble with the INS and their green cards and they were assured no, but I can imagine it’s very worrisome.
D. Haliczer: Ken and I did talk to the Executive Inspector General’s Office about this and were told that anyone who signs the form is again in compliance and should not be worried about that.

President Peters: If you have questions like this, please direct them to Deb. That’s our point person on this. Of course, a lot of us are working behind the scenes to try to get to a good way that everybody can understand and accept and is not arbitrary.

All right, are we done with FAC and IBHE?

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 Bobbie Cesarek – no report

E. BOT – Paul Stoddard – no report

F. Academic Policy Committee – John Wolfskill, Chair – no report

G. Resources, Space, and Budgets Committee – Linda Derscheid, Chair – report (Page 13)

President Peters: What’s our next report? From Linda.

L. Derscheid: The Resources, Space, and Budgets met November 15 with Dr. Rathindra Bose who was gracious enough to come and talk with us about issues concerning the Graduate School and the Division of Research and Graduate Studies and with a large budget deficit that he inherited when he came, he’s been working very hard with other people to try to get out of that deficit and it’s looking like the beginning of this year they’ll be pretty well deficit free and so that’s sounding good and he explained how he had, was forced because of the deficit, to cut back on support for graduate students’ travel and faculty travel but now he’s been gradually able to reinstate much of that funding and the resources to graduate students and faculty for their research efforts. So I think we can look for that. He’s also pushing for an increase in the stipend for the Summer Research Artistry Grants and so we’re hoping that will be able to go through.

President Peters: Any questions? Excellent. The more external funds we get the more indirect cost recovery, the more things we can fund. Is that it?

H. Rules and Governance Committee – William Tolhurst, Chair – no report

I. University Affairs Committee – Jody Newman-Ryan, Chair – no report

J. Elections and Legislative Oversight Committee – Brigid Lusk, Chair – no report
VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

A. Computer usage in campus labs – Raymond Alden, III

President Peters: We have new business. Computer usage in computer labs. Ray Alden.

Provost Alden: Before break I was contacted by a senior faculty member who was complaining that his students, for their final term project, were not having adequate access on computers in the computer lab because, in his characterization, there were a bunch of students playing games on them and wanted to find a way to restrict use of the computers for academic purposes. Having been through this at another university, I suggested there may be alternate things that we can do but I think it’s up to some committee to really look at this from both the students’ perspective and the faculty’s perspective. The way we resolved it at UNLV was at critical times of the year, two weeks before finals and around midterms, we had sign up sheets in the labs so that people would sign up for a definitive block of time and not spend the whole day on the computer, monopolizing computer resources. I’m not saying that’s the best approach, but I’m not sure we want to play computer cops either so I thought I would bring it forward to this group and let the body decide what committee may want to handle this because at least the faculty member says he’s been complaining about it for years and nothings been done and, in his opinion, the problem is getting worse all the time.

President Peters: All right, any questions or comments on that? We have to find a committee to come up with some reasonable – it’s a rationing problem isn’t it? If the good is there, use the good but at critical times and all the machines are used and somebody is playing a game or something, then – or maybe we ought to limit the amount of time. There are all kinds or strategies. Promod, did you have your hand up there? Were you one of them who were playing games?

P. Vohra: Is there a computer advising committee who can look into this matter?

P. Stoddard: There’s the Computer Facilities Advisory Committee that Wally Czerniak chairs. It’s not an elected representative body but the people on it do represent – there are faculty and students there as well as a large number of computer literate people so ---

President Peters: Is there someone from the Council who sits on that that could be a liaison?

P. Stoddard: Yeah, I do.

President Peters: All right, we expect a report.

P. Stoddard: We should probably have a motion to refer it to CFAC.
President Peters: All right, we’ll entertain a motion to refer this to the Computer Facilities Advisory Committee. Is there a second? Any discussion? All those in favor say aye. Okay, very good. I kind of skipped over Unfinished Business. I think we don’t have any.

IX. COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

President Peters: Okay, any comments, questions? All right?

P. Stoddard: Dr. Giles has a question.

J. Giles: If I teach a course next year after I retire, A) do I have to take the stupid ethics test and B) if I fail the stupid ethics test after I’ve retired, how could I be disciplined?

K. Gallagher: Just remember what happened to Governor Ryan.

President Peters: I think the answer is probably you have to take the ethics test, right?

P. Stoddard: If you get a paycheck you have to take the ethics test.

J. Giles: I do?

P. Stoddard: If you work one hour for the university, for the state, that hour is taking the ethics test.

J. Giles: I have to take more than 10 minutes?

President Peters: Trustees take it.

J. Stephen: So does the Governor.

President Peters: The Governor takes it.

J. Stephen: Do we know that?

President Peters: It took him several hours. No, no, no. This is a deliberative body. Anything else?

X. INFORMATION ITEMS

A. Academic Planning Council minutes
B. Athletic Board minutes
C. Campus Security and Environmental Quality minutes
D. Committee on Initial Teacher Certification minutes
E. Committee on Undergraduate Curriculum minutes
F. Graduate Council minutes
G. University Assessment Panel minutes
H. University Benefits Committee minutes
I. Undergraduate Coordinating Council minutes

XI. ADJOURNMENT

President Peters: Motion to adjourn?

The meeting adjourned at 4:08 P.M.