I. CALL TO ORDER

President Peters: I think everyone who is going to be here is here so let me call the October 11 University Council to order.

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

II. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

President Peters: The first item of business is the adoption of the agenda. There’s a walk-in from Rules and Governance Committee. A written report that goes under 6, H – Roman VI, H. I’ll call for a motion to adopt today’s agenda. 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 SEPTEMBER 13, 2006 MEETING (Pages 3-5)

President Peters: On pages 3-5, we have minutes from our September 13, 2006 meeting. I’ll call for any additions or corrections. All right. Motion to approve the minutes? Second? All those in favor say aye. Opposed? All right, we’ve approved the minutes.

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

President Peters: This could be a very short meeting today. I wonder what happened to summer. Hope you all find your winter coats; I’m looking for mine. Make sure you avail yourselves of flu shots. I don’t when that’s happening on campus; I think soon in various spots. Every time I get one I get ill. So, I’m not going to get one this year. That’s not a good reason.

I don’t have a lot to say today. I hope everybody gets a chance to take a look at my State of the University Address which is now, in one form or another, up on the website. They were supposed to have a pod cast of it. I don’t know if that made it, complete with video clips. So if you have any, you know, questions about that, I’d be happy to talk about that. A couple of things I would like to draw your attention to. We’d appreciate it if everyone took a look at our website, our new design and give comments. You know, websites have become the portal into universities, well, just about everything and it’s extremely important that we have a similar look and feel and, more important, it’s about getting information quick. I don’t know if you’re like me but anytime I want to find something on a website, you know, some program or what the president had to say or how the Department of Political Science is organized, I want to be able to get into that website and get where I want quick and rather than see a lot of fancy movement, wait for it to load, you know, you want to get to the information quick. How many clicks away is the information? Also, I think it’s important that there be a fairly standard look to the outside world, at least in the face page so that, you know, you sort of brand yourself. The other thing that is happening with university websites is that they are the primary – in addition to being the primary entry point for everybody – the biggest, largest number of hits is perspective students. That’s what that website is supposed to be; it’s supposed to be for perspective students. It’s becoming the major recruitment tool and so you have to get information about the university – the information that perspective students want, fairly quickly. So, if you just took a random sample of universities in the country and particularly those that have updated their website in the past six months to a year – I don’t know what a half-life of a website is, it can’t be more than a year – you’ll see what they have become is the portal for students. That’s the domain we want people to use, NIU.edu, and then quickly get to other good information on the university, whether it’s a college, a department, a program, a professor, a student. It’s like everybody has “My Space”. I mean, it’s thousand of websites and you want to be able to get to that in a relatively quick way. We’ve a group quietly, you know, people who really get passionate about this stuff and boy, people who are passionate about websites are hard to talk to, I mean, they want it their way. That logo should be right there; it should flash at you. So, at any rate, take a look at it. I think there’s a comment page that you can – Jerry Zar has already chimed in by the way. He caught six spelling errors. Of course, this was very embarrassing. He caught spelling errors in my State of the University Address.

Today, our Provost, Ray Alden, was supposed to be here to talk a little bit about strategic planning but he is under the weather and is indisposed so I just want to say that he is working along on strategic planning. I don’t know maybe getting those – do you know when the search committee is going to be formalized? He’s very close. Since we announced this more formally in the State of the University, now everybody wants to be on the Strategic Planning Committee so that’s a good sign. People want to be involved and it is an important thing so you’ll hear more about that.
Yesterday I attended the regularly scheduled meeting of the Illinois Board of Higher Education and all the public university and chancellors met. I don’t have much to report on that. There is not a lot to report on budget development for FY08 which is probably the most important thing that the IBHE does; they recommend to the governor. That reason should be pretty obvious; this is an election year and the apparatus is not focused on budget development at this point. We are hoping for a good budget. The revenues are reasonable; they’re up, but there are a lot of needs. We still have a pent-up capital demand that’s backlogged four years. No capital bill in four years. There is some talk about trying to run one in the veto session but my guess is we won’t see a capital bill until the spring and when we see one, it should be a fairly substantial bill and hopefully we can get a couple of those projects, state funded projects – Stevens would be the number one thing that has to happen. Really, there’s not much talk about it. Now, soon after the election they have to get going because you have to put a budget together. We haven’t heard too much except that there are a couple of things that has happened. One is I think is obvious to those of you who have put in HICA grants over the years, that money from HICA grants has been just about decimated. It know there used to be, I know Virginia Cassidy said, about 30 million dollars – 20 to 30 million – now it’s down to 5 million and a lot of that money has either gone or been reallocated to student financial aide or whatever. It’s pretty much gone and that’s unfortunate. I think a lot of good happened with those grants from the state but those are pretty much gone. The other thing I think you could see in budget development is that, you know depending on the outcome of the election, there’ll be two kinds – perhaps two kinds of revenue flow – one would be an increase in base budget for things like salaries and, you know, GR, but I think you may see some money that is dedicated to more programmatic issues. Performance based issues. For instance, if the state has a work force development need and it needs more engineers, it needs more nurses, it needs more special ed teachers, it needs programs that stimulate economic development, we need to do more for energy conservation, you know, I’m making those up but those are pretty – health care, health issues – I think you may see some challenge money out there for universities to compete for based upon outcomes. You know, for instance if – IBHE approved a program yesterday for grants to nursing programs and, you know, if you put in a proposal and say look, we’ll produce ten more nurses a year, you’ll get money to do that but then you’ll have to be held accountable. Actually, I do think that’s going to be an increasingly evident part of the landscape in the next years everywhere and that is more performance based funding. Contract sorts of things where the state has a need, higher education can help, state will fund some money and then hold you accountable for the results or the money goes away. It’s been done in other states to moderate degrees of success but I think you may see that. Why is that? The reason for that is that if you look at the priorities that are facing most states with some rare exceptions, higher education is not the highest priority. I mean, you’ve got health care issues, Medicaid/Medicare issues. You have issues of K-12 funding and equalization. You have, I’m going to say the “P” word, pensions that are, you know, state-funded pensions. Energy and utilities and then you’ve got probably child care and higher ed are about fifth just above or below the radar screen. It’s really hard to get that to the attention of policy makers when they’re facing all these other issues so our job is, and we’ve got two jobs, one is to get us higher in that ranking and get some funding by indicating to the state how we can help with those other priorities. So that is sort of the strategy I see emerging. The other thing we have to, and I said it in my speech, we have to be more entrepreneurial and find ways to make that happen and we have to do our private fundraising and for our science programs or research
programs where there are external dollars, they must be sought or we can’t do that research. I think that’s the changing landscape; it’s been coming for some time now. It’s really on us right now. I think we’re really well-prepared for that. I think we’ve done better than most so we’ll keep you informed. You won’t hear anything about this until December, until after the election and then if there’s a change in part in the governor’s office; you won’t hear anything until January or February until they get organized. But it looks as if the economy is reasonably strong and revenue estimates are not bad. Of course there was some windfall from the inflated gasoline prices. I mean, that brought in a lot of tax money into the state so – I’m not going to talk about the federal government.

All right, don’t forget October 21st is homecoming. We’ve got homecoming and remember we’re doing kind of a joint thing with DeKalb. It’s their 105th Sesquicentennial so have been a lot of people in the community who really want to try to do their best to revive the homecoming parade. I know our Student Affairs’ people and our Student Association have been involved and I don’t expect you to get up at 5:00 in the morning for this but let’s hope we have a good turn-out and good weather.

Tomorrow – the last thing I have on my list – is our ground breaking. Bring your boots and mufflers for the housing for students with dependents or remember what we call it now – Northern View Community and we’re going to have a groundbreaking and Brian, I think you told me there will be a heated tent. I’m not coming unless there is a heated tent and hot chocolate. Is there going to be hot chocolate? Yes, you see that? So, if you happen to be out by the Convocation Center, we’re going to have – what time is that? 1:00 out there.

All right, that’s all I have.

V. CONSENT AGENDA

A. NIU Connect

President Peters: All right, Consent Agenda. I think Paul has something to say about the Consent Agenda.

P. Stoddard: Right, it just says NIU Connect. Basically, what we would like to do is make the Academic Policy Committee the University Council point body for interfacing with the NIU Connect process. That’s again the student software implementation project so they will be kept aware of what’s going on and should any concerns come up that they think the university community would be interested in discussing, they will bring it to the attention of this body so that’s their task this year.

President Peters: All right, so is there a motion to approve the Consent Agenda? Second? Discussion? All those in favor say aye. Opposed? We have a Consent Agenda.

The Consent Agenda was approved.
VI. REPORTS FROM COUNCILS, BOARDS, AND STANDING COMMITTEES

President Peters: It looks like we have to move all the way down to “E”, Paul Stoddard, Board of Trustees has a report.

A. FAC to IBHE – Jody Newman-Ryan – 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 Bobbie Cesarek – no report

E. BOT – Paul Stoddard – report (Page 6)

P. Stoddard: Okay, before I give that report, I will just note that the next FAC meeting is October 20 in Edwardsville and our representative to that body, Jody Newman-Ryan, has a conference she needs to go to that week so she cannot attend so if anybody would like an all expense paid trip to Edwardsville ---

President Peters: Better tell them were Edwardsville is.

P. Stoddard: I don’t want to do that. I hear it’s a very new and vibrant campus these days and is worth seeing.

President Peters: It is.

P. Stoddard: This is actually a very important role. Of course, FAC is really our voice with the IBHE so it is important that somebody go so if anybody is interested and can make that trip, please let me or Jody know as soon as possible. That said ---

President Peters: Of course it also could be said that on the 20th, Redbirds could be playing the Mets in the World Series in St. Louis.

P. Stoddard: Well no, I would have made my plans to go down there already. No, Mets should have it wrapped up by then. You heard it here first.

Moving on to the Board of Trustees Report, the full Board met on September 21. They received the reports from the various standing committees, nothing controversial came up at that point. The President has already touched on a couple of the items that are listed on page 6 which is the report, notably the capital budget and the Northern View Community project. The FY07 internal budget was approved. Some note was made of the fact that the state’s contribution continues to dwindle and I’ve calculated it is now just over 27% of our entire budget. This is way down from
years ago. A new master’s degree in Family and Consumer Sciences was approved. Collective bargaining agreements were reached with 3 unions; they were approved. The NIU Foundation is looking to boost the endowment. This is going to be as the President indicated in his State of the University Address in the form of endowed scholarships and chairs and so forth so that’s going to be a major fund-raising thrust for the next future. Finally, we – and again these presentations are always great – we got one from the CHANCE program. Dr. Leroy Mitchell is the Director of that program and one of the participants talked to us for a little bit and discussed how having been in this environment at Northern in DeKalb compared to where she grew up, seeing the priority so many of her classmates placed on getting a good education, seeing how her roommate was thoroughly upset about getting a “B” when she would have been thrilled with just a “C” really changed her outlook on education. That’s really what the CHANCE program is about is letting people see, you know, who wouldn’t otherwise get the opportunity, what’s there for them and a lot of these students really do go on to succeed and become points of pride for Northern so the CHANGE program really is something worthwhile that we are doing. That was made clear to me and I believe to the Board as a whole by this presentation.

That was most of the highlights. Any questions? I’d be happy to entertain. Thank you.

President Peters: All right, thank you Paul.

F. Academic Policy Committee – John Wolfskill, Chair

G. Resources, Space, and Budgets Committee – Linda Derscheid, Chair

H. Rules and Governance Committee – William Tolhurst, Chair – report – walk-in

President Peters: William Tolhurst from Rules and Governance, our favorite Committee has a report.

W. Tolhurst: About five items were reviewed to the committee at the first meeting and we are proceeding with all deliberate speed and we’ve considered two of them. The first is one that will involve a motion. That is a request from the – let me get the committee right, where are we here – the Campus Security Committee, that the current smoking ban for university vehicles be extended to cover all vehicles. At present, the vehicles assigned to individuals and to departments do not fall under that ban so that the committee has forwarded to us language which they would like used to implement – to amend – the current smoking ban and that is on the walk-in that is in front of you I presume. That’s the first one and we will move that that be adopted by the University Council.

The second item is one that was referred to us by Provost Legg and the UC/PC. We don’t have a lot of information on this. The request that was posted to us was that we should “combine tenure and promotion to associate professor”. No explanation was given as to what that would be exactly nor was there any reason given as to why it should be done. Under these circumstances, we don’t feel comfortable in supporting that recommendation. Should we proceed to the motion then?
President Peters: The only thing I could share, out of curiosity you know, I think I remember this conversation with Provost Legg and it was something I had dealt with in my other situations, is in the normal case of events, when someone is in a tenure track situation and, given the normal case and there’s always exceptions, some disciplines, some colleges have different rules on this – but that in the normal case, to tenure someone and not promote them to associate is not a good thing because it, you know, if you’re good enough to tenure, you ought to be good enough to promote. So I think he was getting at that but I don’t know.

W. Tolhurst: If I might respond, I mean, the current rules and Bylaws say that except in exceptional circumstances, tenure will not be ordered without promotion because the requirements are substantially the same. There are, however, exceptional circumstances and it’s not clear whether this was meant to rule out those exceptions. There is at least one college on campus that routinely promotes before tenure because that’s the norm within the profession and we weren’t sure how that would impact that college as well.

President Peters: Well, I’ve had a lot of experience with that college and that rule. Not here, other places.

W. Tolhurst: Well, the Rules and Governance Committee in the previous year had dealt with just that issue and addressed it and indeed, Provost Legg was present at that meeting and as far as I can see, to adopt this without at least careful consideration and understanding of exactly what’s required, would be to recreate a problem that has since been solved.

President Peters: Again, I’m not supporting it, I was just trying to remember what the rationale is.

W. Tolhurst: ??? to support it.

President Peters: Good, so it’s – right, the new Provost if he wants to resurrect that can.

W. Tolhurst: I did consult with the new Provost before taking it to the committee.

President Peters: Good, okay. We need a motion to – I didn’t hear that?

J. Stephen: I move to adopt the Consent Agenda.

President Peters: All right, there’s a motion to adopt the recommendations. Second? Discussion? We should have had the discussion after the move but we had it. All those in favor say aye. Opposed? Abstained? All right, good. That’s it?

The motion to accept the Consent Agenda passed.

I. University Affairs Committee – Jody Newman-Ryan, Chair

J. Elections and Legislative Oversight Committee – Brigid Lusk, Chair
President Peters: Brigid Lusk, Elections and Legislative Oversight Committee.

VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

President Peters: Any unfinished or old business?

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

A. University Holiday Calendar 2007 (Page 7)

President Peters: New business we have the Holiday Calendar on page 7. We must approve that, is that correct? I think this comes to us from Dr. Cunningham. Steve is here? You want to defend this Steve? Better grab a microphone. Just so we know what we’re voting on and why we vote on it and educate some of the new members about this.

S. Cunningham: Thank you. This is the annual holiday calendar. It’s the best distribution of the available floating and closure days that we have. It was authorized by President Peters to be reviewed by the Operating Staff, the Supportive Professional Staff Councils. They looked it over and gave it their endorsement and so in keeping with our annual process of bringing it before the Council before we distribute it to the campus; we offer it for your endorsement.

President Peters: This is most important for work schedules. All right? Motion to adopt? Second? Discussion? All those in favor say aye. Opposed? We have a holiday schedule.

S. Cunningham: Thank you.

President Peters: I like floating holidays.

IX. COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

President Peters: Any comments, any questions, anything for the good of the order?

P. Stoddard: I would just point out the last sheet is the alternate policy so if you can’t make one of these sessions there’s a list of people from your college. You need to contact one of those people to serve as your alternate so this is not so wide open. There are specific people who are eligible to serve. That’s on the last page.

President Peters: Professor Stephen?

J. Stephen: We have Michael Bishop listed twice here. Who was the person who left that we forgot to scratch off? Both Michael Bishops go. Okay.

President Peters: There are two Michael Bishops?

???: No, he was listed twice. There are zero Michael Bishops.
President Peters: Buck, did you have a question?

J. Stephen: No, that was my comment.

President Peters: You’re the new Jerry Zar.

J. Stephen: I guess.

X. INFORMATION ITEMS

A. Minutes, Academic Planning Council
B. Minutes, Athletic Board minutes
C. Minutes, Campus Security and Environmental Quality
D. Minutes, Committee on Initial Teacher Certification
E. Minutes, Committee on Undergraduate Curriculum
F. Minutes, Graduate Council
G. Minutes, Undergraduate Coordinating Council minutes
H. Minutes, University Assessment Panel
I. Minutes, University Benefits Committee minutes
J. Alternate List (Page 8)

XI. ADJOURNMENT

President Peters: All right. That’s it. We’re adjourned.

The meeting adjourned at 3:35 P.M.