UNIVERSITY COUNCIL TRANSCRIPT  
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2007, 3:00 P.M.  
ALTGELD HALL 225


Parliamentarian Ferald Bryan was present.

ABSENT: Boughton, Butler, Cesarek, Grall, Mirman, Nuzzo, Pernell, Prawitz, Purnell, Richmond, Schneider, Schoenbachler, Stravers, Thu, Williams

I. CALL TO ORDER

President Peters: Let me call the September 12, 2007 meeting of the University Council to order.

II. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

President Peters: Our first item of business is the adoption of the agenda. You’ll – at your place – find two walk-in items. One is the report to NIU BOT Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, and Personnel Committee. That is a committee report. The second item is an information item under Information on alternate policy for members of the Faculty Senate. That’s an information item. With those two additions, is there a motion to adopt the agenda? We have a motion; second? Discussion? All those in favor say aye. Opposed?

Stephen made the motion; Baker seconded.

The agenda was approved as written.

III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MAY 2, 2007 MEETING (Pages 3-7)

President Peters: In your packet on pages 3-7 are the minutes of May 2. Are there any additions or corrections? Motion to approve is in order. We have a motion. Is there a second? Second. Any discussion? All those in favor say aye. The minutes are approved.

Baker made the motion; Kowalski seconded.

The minutes were approved as written.

IV. PRESIDENT’S ANNOUNCEMENTS
President Peters: Well, welcome back everyone. I hope you’re all high and dry. We do have some of – will all of the new members raise your hands? Okay, we’ve got some new members. Welcome. We have a couple of new deans, I believe. Chris McCord from Liberal Arts, Watson, Anderson – I can’t see you. All right, new deans. We’re ready to go. Same old administrators? Okay. Nobody new. You’ve got to always watch these things.

Well, welcome back everyone. What a calamitous – floods, pestilence, mosquitoes, stray dogs invading our territory, cats – what a colossally difficult start. But we’re here and we’re high and dry and we’re running. The flood was a very interesting event. Move In Day were we annual put three or four thousand new students into the residence halls in addition to upper classmen who had been moving in so we could get operational that week, to have a micro tornado-like conditions with about a thousand volunteers and this is the first experience for our new students and their parents are with them and so we had to take shelter and everyone played their part. It was good and then our crack meteorologist, Gilbert, informs us in the middle of the night that the tsunami was coming and the next day, of course, we’re operational in that we had several thousand students on campus already and so you got to take care of that big city and we called the Emergency Crisis Management Team together very early in the morning and made an assessment coordinated with the local people to find out what the situation was. In terms of weather, no one is better than Gilbert. Gilbert’s models are much better predictors than you could normally get and we immediately shut down the University because, even though we were operational and we had several thousand students here, we didn’t think we needed normal operations because the bridges were closing. There were two bridges open in DeKalb and we weren’t sure about the Bethany bridge so we wanted to get everybody out and that worked okay working with the city in that hopefully we can have some better direction. But that worked all right. We would not have canceled any sooner than that but we canceled. But we had three hundred emergency critical personnel on campus. That’s about what it takes to keep the physical plant going and to keep the residents halls – you know, we had to feed people. We had to make sure they secure, set up command posts. We were helping out the American Red Cross with the Sycamore residents who were displaced in the trailer park and had nowhere to go at midnight the night before so we made a command decision to take them and put them in a place where they could have a shower and there could be a triage. I’m very grateful to our people for doing that.

We got reports and tremendous cooperation with the DeKalb Fire Department who kept us assessed of the situation and we had emergency vehicles positioned in case we got landlocked or emout. We were working overtime; the goal became on Friday to try to get operational by Monday. We have several buildings flooding; taking on water. We got that controlled. The big issue for us on Friday was that the Lucinda substation which supplies power to that part of campus, was take out and we had to locate a very complicated substation. We found one, got it trucked in overnight, cabling had to be provided for it. It took us a while to get it hooked up but what that meant was, you know, at home when you’ve got a problem you take one of these strips and you start plugging in more stuff. We had the whole campus plugged in to the west campus and so we were very lucky in that regard. We have a solution to that so that kind of thing doesn’t happen but we haven’t been able to get the state to release the money that they promised us several years ago which – I brought that to their attention right away. During the night our people – our students participated in sandbag operations – I want to thank them. It made a difference in the community. Our students don’t get enough credit for how they help out this community and that was one of their finest hours. They were out there helping with the
sandbags. With the exception of a couple – the Art Building – and a couple of other buildings, we were fully operational Monday morning after round the clock efforts by a lot of people and it could have been a lot worse. The timing of the weather was not good. I filed Saturday, along with the mayors of Sycamore and the county and DeKalb, an emergency declaration which needs to be done so that you become eligible for any federal disaster aid. You remember, it took a while for the Governor to declare DeKalb County a disaster area, which makes us then potentially eligible and some of the costs that were incurred, hopefully, can be recovered. We’re in the process of assessing what that cost was. The cost was mainly in, you know, personnel time that substation. The substation was a couple of hundred thousand dollars but we’ll have to wait and see. So, you know, I think we were extremely lucky. There were, to my knowledge, there were no serious or even minor injuries. It was a – our new students will always remember their first week so a big thank you to everyone who participated. As I walked around, I was just amazed at how hard working and dedicated our physical plant people are. The way those physical plant over in Art, and I know Dean Kafer would agree with me, was truly amazing. They wouldn’t give up. They wanted to get that thing ready but didn’t quite get there. But anyway, our systems work. You remember for those who have been around, when we dredged the lagoon. The reason for that – that holds back water. It spills over, doesn’t cause damage, and holds the water back in the Kish so it doesn’t flood neighborhoods. That’s the reason for that lagoon and then we have the west lagoon that drains these thousands of acres of farmland through Watson Creek, out through the east lagoon and then out to the Kish, down by the levee and down by the radio station. It was darn near a 100-year event. Now whether or not global warming is going to make this more frequent, I don’t know. You probably know Paul, right? Ask Al Gore, he’ll probably have an opinion on that but the system did work but, you know, the geography of this whole area is a bit wet so that’s how a lot of us spent fifty-six hours the first few days.

Just a little bit about enrollment. We have hit our enrollment targets. In other words, we were for stable enrollment. That’s what we have – we’ve stretched our resources; we have to have stable enrollment. We have to turn people away but we hit all of our targets. We will release the official ten day report soon. We’re cleaning those up I believe Ray? We’re cleaning that up and then we’ll release that but basically, we hit our freshman target which is somewhere around three thousand. Our transfer target was around two thousand so about five thousand. That’s what we planned for. We just about hit it right on. We must have turned away four or five hundred qualified students. We’re about twenty-five thousand. We don’t – it’s, you know, graduate enrollment always takes a little while and the off-campus takes awhile because they don’t necessarily have to reason at a point certain. So I wish we could take more, but we couldn’t, but we have stable enrollment. People work real hard on that as you know. The enrollment management taskforce and enrollment services group – Gip, I think you chair that – works year round. You’re already working for next year. I mean, this isn’t something – I mean everyday they work on this and try to make sure our resources match our ability or the number of people we take and Ray might want to mention more about that.

Let me talk about the thing I always talk about and that’s the budget and I thought I was going to have to come back for the first meeting of the Council and say, guess what, we still don’t have a budget. We kind of have a budget. It went on all summer and finally a budget was passed parts of which were vetoed by the Governor but, and you probably all know the bottom line but let me
rehearse it for you. We have an operating budget, that is budgets for salaries and services and utilities, and that budget as it was passed, called for about a 2% increase in operating. The Governor used the powers of the mandatory veto, line item veto, and it’s not just – he can take a line and reduce a line, not just zero it out – for all of higher education, took a fractional part out of the operating budget. The way it worked was like this. Last year, the IBHE recommended to the Governor an operating increase of 1.5%. The Governor in his budget message in February upped that to 1.8%. The Legislature when they passed the budget this July, August – whatever it was – added .02%. The Governor then cut it back to his original 1.8, so go figure all that. The mandatory veto to us meant about a $123,000. Now, that has been signed, that’s solid, that’s what we have to operate with. Meanwhile, the Legislature, in particular the Speaker of the House, is holding hearings around the state the next week or two to discuss potential overrides of the mandatory vetoes by the Governor which might, in fact, include an override of the mandatory veto of the high education operating. I don’t know whether that’s going to happen, but that’s happening. There’s a legal battle going on between the Legislature and the Governor over whether the Legislature has to book that amount. There is a veto session scheduled for October 2 and then October 10 – there’s always two different dates – that’s earlier this year. They’re usually in November and there may be some override attempts there. All right. No capital budget was acted on again at this point in time. In other words, no Steven’s money, whatever’s in our capital. That is not over with. There may be – I understand there are going to be some hearings on the capital bill in the next couple of weeks and there is a chance in the veto session, that there may be a capital bill that may ultimately include Stevens and some other of our projects. Quite frankly, the issue there is there is great pressure for the Legislature to do something about CTA and RTA in Chicago. You’ve been reading about that in the papers. Others are holding out – before they help with that problem, they want the capital budget dealt with – money for schools and roads and bridges and higher education and so what they’re trying to do is meld both of those together but there has to be an acceptable revenue stream and the Legislature and the Governor are not agreeing on that. Casinos and this tax and a sales tax – to be determined. So, the bottom line is we are up, we are operating, we have an increase and we haven’t had that in a while – but we have a lot of needs. Very soon now the analyses are going forward – I will announce a salary increment package – probably in the next week or so. The Trustees meet on the 22nd of September and my State of the University is on the 27th so we want to get that out there between now and then and whatever our package is, it will be retroactive to July 1 and all the employee groups is giving their input as they always do, as to how that money should be divided. Since it is a very top priority, we’re going to try to devote as much as we can to that but then again, you know, we did – for years we’ve had flat budgets and we’ve had to use a lot of our own money – we’ve used our own money – for salary increases and we really can’t sustain too much more of that so we have to use the money, that new money, we’re getting from the state and see if we can’t augment that in some way. So I hope that’s going to be a positive and you’re going to hear about that very, very soon. Again, no capital to report on at this time.

Again, the Board meeting is on the 22nd and my State of the University address is moved up a little bit. It’s usually the first week of October so it’s going to be the last week in September, September 27, and I’m going to devote almost the entire time to reacting and talking about the work of Ray Alden and his group and many of you last year, and that is the development of the first blush of the Strategic Planning document and Ray is going to talk about that in just a sec, but I have read it many times now and it’s about to go public on a website I believe and Ray will
talk about that in a minute but I’ve been so impressed with so much that’s in there and I’m going to try to highlight what I consider to be some of the more important aspects of it. I’m going to try to put it in the context of my overall planning vision for NIU which I’ve talked about many times – try to move it along in a pragmatic way – so we don’t just talk about it, we actually do something. There’s a lot of work to be done and then try to identify how we might, in the next five years, devote resources to it. What I consider, however, to be the most healthy thing about all this is the good talk that has occurred and the consensus that’s emerging about some of the basic priorities. The focus on teaching and learning, the focus on multidisciplinary issues, the focus on climate issues, the student centeredness of it, chewing on big ideas and the need for us to intellectually be in more conversations about our curriculum, our general education. How can we bring all the colleges and programs together with more commonality than, you know, the traditional structure of American public research universities ??? bunkered and silos and I don’t see that here and I think that’s a good thing so I’m very excited about that and hope you can all show up to that.

Ray, would you just like to give us a snapshot of where we are with your part of the Strategic Planning process and where you’re going?

**R. Alden:** Sure. Last year was a very intensive effort. We had – I think by the time we finished the process, there were probably a hundred and fifty people involved at some point in the process. We had a large taskforce that represented all constituency groups. Forty-five people that worked, at least during the spring, on a week to week basis on this. We had the round tables to bring in other people from various constituency groups to kind of vet what the taskforce had been doing. This summer we had a Deans’ Council Retreat where we talked about how do we transition to the next step. So, what’s being produced to date we’re calling the Strategic Imperatives Document. This is the consensus that John mentioned that there are four big areas of what we’re calling Strategic Imperatives that we would like all of the rest of the plan – whether it’s at the university level or down at the college level – to fit within these big concepts so that we can get a sense of direction that was the result of this consensus building process. At the college level, we’re trying to make sure that everybody uses the same lexicon terms so that when somebody talks about a goal or a milestone, everybody knows what that means and that even with colleges that have been doing strategic planning for many years and some have, they can continue doing the strategic planning like they always have, but we want to see a summary document coming out where everybody is talking about the same types of things so that when we start talking about budgetary or resource or personnel priorities, we can start combining things and come up with some of these strategic directions that we will be taking over the years to come. The Deans’ Council is also going to be soliciting from the university community ideas, concept papers of, you know, we’ve got a lot of good ideas coming out of the taskforce, but we don’t want to make those the only mandates that we follow. Those are examples. We want to have other individuals throughout the university community have the opportunity to either talk about what could be done in their department or a better idea of how to advance one of our Strategic Imperative areas and so a lot going on this fall, trying to get grassroots input into how can we make this – how can we implement a plan that will help advance our Strategic Imperatives and that will be taking place largely after John makes his State of the University speech as a kickoff. So we’re looking forward to everybody kind of rolling up their sleeves and contributing to that effort.
**President Peters:** Good. Well, there will be a – this is going to be a very interesting few years as well try to implement this academic strategic plan – plan for excellence – and it’s broader than that. It dovetails quite nicely with our first ever capital campaign, True North, which is doing quite well. We’re at $113,000,000 on our way to $150,000,000. The focus on that is now all academics. It’s on scholarships. It’s on professorships. Academic programmatic support and this summer as I have taken the time to visit with many of our donors, as I tried to touch base with them, they’re excited about the Strategic Plan and they are eager to hear about it and I think they’re eager to get excited about the ideas. I’m hoping that in these discussions at department and college levels, that some great ideas come up that we can try to find some funding for that fit our role and mission. I really have related to many of the things I’ve heard so far but it’s going to mean working together and working across units and that’s something that’s difficult to do in university but I’m excited about that so I’m going to spend a lot of my time on helping with the Strategic Plan – that is, pushing it along. Finding the resources. Helping sort through ideas. Obviously, work in the state – that continues – I’m going to spend a lot of time on that and a lot of time on the True North Campaign.

The last thing I want to mention today – it should have hit your office – this is the first pass. We’re looking for ideas. We want to improve this. I hope this is a start for people to just have something and we’ve done an awful lot at this university. We’re going to continue to do an awful lot. Part of the Strategic Planning when we talk about our environment and we talk about our climate, you know, it’s just a situation now across this country that there’s an expectation that universities be safe places; that they know how to handle emergencies. I can’t believe the number of regulatory issues that are emerging so we do take it extremely seriously and we do have a very extensive emergency operations plan and I’ve asked Don Grady, our Police Chief – he’s going to head a taskforce that will have representation from Paul and others to review the Virginia Tech Report and squeeze that report and see if there’s anything in there that we can learn from or change. Perhaps change the way we’re doing things. I think we’re doing things well but I think that we need to do that and so I urge you all to encourage your college to do this. We’ve already had some good feedback and we can do some changes and additions but, you know, as a faculty member and having been myself in situations where I didn’t know quite what to do in a classroom situation or I didn’t know what to do in an office situation and I wished I had had a guide like this.

Okay. Normally, we hold questions until the end but we’ll take questions right now if you want because our agenda is a little thin. Anybody want to say anything? Comment? I know that’s an awfully lot to digest. Well, if at the end you have questions, we’ll entertain them.

**V. CONSENT AGENDA**

**President Peters:** Is there a motion to – do we have a Consent Agenda? Yes. Is there a motion to accept the Consent Agenda? Second? Anyone want anything removed? All in favor say aye. We have an Consent Agenda.

A. Approval of University Council Committees for 2007-2008 (Page 8)
B. University Advisory Committee of the Board of Trustees – 2007-2010
C. Funding of the Ombudsman Office/Faculty Personnel Advisor/Executive Secretary/President support for the FAC representative – refer to University Affairs
D. Renaming of Faculty Personnel Advisor – review Bylaw 9 – refer to Rules and Governance

The Consent Agenda was approved as written.

VI. REPORTS FROM COUNCILS, BOARDS, AND STANDING COMMITTEES

President Peters: All right, let’s go into reports.

A. FAC to IBHE – no report


President Peters: We have a report on the Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, and Personnel Committee. That is the walk-on written report.

J. Stephen: There’s a short verbal report that’s folded in to Paul’s BOT report. Basically, at the last meeting of – the long one – Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, Personnel Committee of the BOT of the 2006-2007 year, they did several of the traditional type of curricular bookkeeping types of things. Allowances for courses off campus and such. The main at that meeting was that subcommittee’s endorsement of every one of the sabbatical reports that were received and again, the BOT went out of their way to express their understanding of the need for sabbaticals, their importance, and their continued efforts to defend them and we had a new thing last year that the BOT wants to continue and that’s that two members who were on sabbatical the year before came in and discussed the work that they did so that the BOT could get more of a personal view. Personally, I think that made quite an affect and when we select the two to go next year, we should make them very accessible researchers as opposed to say me talking about something that nobody wants to hear about. Any questions?

President Peters: Thank you Buck. Yeah, I’m very pleased with the level of support that our Board of Trustees has in two policy issues. The sabbatical policy and for staff, that’s very unusual. I don’t know of any university that has sabbatical leaves for staff and the second is their commitment to tenure. I’ve never had one, questioning, negative comment about the concepts and that’s good.

J. Stephen: Oh, there’s a report from the most previous one from Ferald Bryan.

F. Bryan: That’s me.

President Peters: All right.

F. Bryan: My written report is before you from last week’s Board of Trustees’ Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, and Personnel Committee meeting. We were welcomed back to campus
by Chair Vella who acknowledged, as I think our President has already acknowledged, the unsettled times that we live in with budgets and the political situation in Springfield. But this particular meeting focused on progress of teaching, research, and awards to faculty and staff. The main action item was the University’s approval for the Northern Illinois Center for Accelerated and Detector Development, known as NICAD, and even though this Center has been in operation since 2001, it was formally approved and you can read the details of that Center and its very successful operations.

In terms of information items, we received a University Performance Report from Vice-Provost Cassidy and she emphasized that with the ongoing Strategic Planning process, limited reports in nursing and law and initial teacher certification requirements were delivered. There was also a progress report on the Higher Education Learning Commission updating from our successful reaccredidation, which is until 2014, but the June 28th report praised specifically our new assessment plan and received some good accolades.

Next Provost Alden formally recognized the twenty-seven individuals who received Faculty Emeritus designations. Next Provost Alden also honored the recipients of the Professional Excellence Awards for faculty and staff, the Presidential Teaching Professors, Presidential Research Professors, Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching, Operation Staff Outstanding Service Awards, and Presidential Supportive Professional Staff Awards were all officially honored.

Then Vice President for Research and Dean of the Graduate School, Dr. Bose, presented the FY2007 External Funding Progress Report. It was a very impressive PowerPoint presentation. Basically, the bottom line was that even in these lean times, the 5.4 million received in external funding was a 1% increase over the previous year and the benchmarks included comparisons of external funding from fellow MAC institutions. It think he cited with pride the fact that we’re ahead of his previous institution, Kent State, in particular and also highlighted individual departments and their success in raising funds.

Finally then President Peters and Provost Alden offered a brief overview of a draft of the new University Strategic Plan and, as you’ve just heard, they’ll have the formal kickoff for the Strategic Plan will be part of the President’s State of the University Address.

This concludes my report but I do have documents and would be happy to answer any questions if you have them.


C. BOT Finance, Facilities, and Operations Committee – Paul Stoddard and Xueshu Song – report

**P. Stoddard:** Yes, right after the Committee Ferald just reported on, FFO met. They covered essentially a lot of the beginning of the year budgetary process reviewing University requests and so forth. Again, all these are recommendations that are made to the full Board which votes on everything a week from tomorrow when they meet. As the President indicated, our capital budget remains uncertain. The University has seven projects totally 131 million that are on the request list. Of those, we hope to somebody see – in the not too distant future – money for the Stevens’ renovation project. We’ll see.

There’s a lesser capital budget called “Capital Renewal”. This is for projects between $100,000 and $1,500,000. There are twenty-four projects there totally 12 million including installation of fire alarms and replacing heating and air conditioning units and the like. Some of those should be funded; but probably not all of them would be my guess. Then there’s also a non-appropriations capital budget. This is money essentially from revenue bond issues and so forth which covers the installation of sprinklers in dorms, paving of parking lots and other surfaces that need it and so forth. This is all paid from money within the University’s budget and not requiring anything from Springfield.

Moving on, as the President indicated, right now we’re in line for an approximately 1.9% increase in our appropriated budget from 103.9 million to 105.9 million. Our non-appropriated budget is increasing from 287.6 million to 300.3 million. That’s an increase of about 4.4% so we’re looking at a total increase in the University’s budget of 3.5%. Looking at these numbers in a slightly different way, last year the state provided through appropriations budget process, 26.5% of our budget. This year they are providing 26.1% of our budget and this is a continuing trend that’s been going on since I’ve been playing around with these numbers for the last three or four years. Soon, it looks like we’ll be under a quarter of our budget coming from the state if this continues the way it is. When students complain, as they have every right to, about high tuition and high fees, the answer is we don’t want to do it, but in order to assure a quality education, when Springfield is not keeping up with inflation, we have to find extra money someplace and unfortunately, tuition and fees are one of the places we have to go. We have other avenues and the President mentioned True North as one of those places to go to try to improve the educational experience at Northern without directly hitting the students. Everybody wants to keep affordability at a maximum.

Other than that, there were a lot of, what I would consider, fairly routine issues – approving large grant expenditures and the like – renewal of the technology surcharge and so forth. Unfortunately, the meeting ran late and I had to go to class so I missed most of the end of it but I’m assured by Nancy Castle who filled in for me for the end, that there were no fireworks so I think everything must have gone fairly smoothly and nothing too unusual and I’ll have a full report on the Board meeting, a written report, for the next University Council and August will be covered again at that time.

**President Peters:** Those are all recommendations – budgetary recommendations to the full committee so they’ll have to be voted on by the full Board. We are approaching our total University budget of a half a billion dollars. The State portion of that is 105 million. That’s still a lot of money, I mean – you know – still the most important thing to us is to get an increase in our base operating dollars from the state because those are base dollars that recur. So many of
our other dollars are one time dollars that have to be replenished every year in various ways. Still, we are extending our operations and, you know, and unfortunately students have had to pay more than their fair share – it’s true across the country – of – my message to you is this has been hard but we’re in good shape. I mean we’re operating, we’re not laying people off, we’re progressing, we’re doing more than – we’re doing great things. There are some states now that are in real trouble. Michigan is – I was talking to the president of one of the Michigan universities yesterday and he had a 22% hit in his budget because the state didn’t have a budget and they missed their first two months of payment that may never come back. That was 22% of their budget so, you know, I guess all is relevant. But that was a good report.

D. BOT Legislation, Audit, and External Affairs Committee – Jay Monteiro and Bobbie Cesarek – report (Pages 9-11)

President Peters: Okay. I think now we’re into New Business? Correct?

P. Stoddard: No, Legislation, Audit, and External Affairs. Okay, that report is in the packet apparently.

President Peters: All right. Yes?

J. Stephen: Item F on that is SB 313 – Board of Higher Education Act – It said it passed both Houses. I don’t know if our illustrious Governor has put his signature on it – page 9. Item F at the bottom of the page. It says “provides that a state university determines that if a student needs remedial coursework, then the university must require that the student complete the remedial coursework before pursuing his or her course of study”. We have avoided the word remediation so much and used things like under prepared that one, I don’t know what remediation means anymore but more importantly I’m wondering if this passes, does it effect our CHANCE Program negatively?

President Peters: No.


President Peters: It’s a Senate bill – quite frankly, I don’t know what the – Gip, do you ---

E. Seaver: It doesn’t affect any of our students ???.

J. Stephen: Okay.

President Peters: Right. I caught the word too because most of my experience in other states is that you could not do remedial work at the university level. You couldn’t offer the courses but that has changed in the past decade because you need – if you admit someone and they need developmental work in whatever it is, English or mathematics, you have to take care of that. That’s a need. But – I don’t know what, you know, Gip says we’re okay, we must be okay. All right. Now any questions on Legislation, Audit?
E. BOT – Paul Stoddard – report

F. Academic Policy Committee – William Baker, Chair – no report

G. Resources, Space, and Budgets Committee – Linda Derscheid, Chair – no report

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

I. University Affairs Committee – David Wade, Chair – no report

J. Elections and Legislative Oversight Committee – Toni Tollerud, Chair – no report

VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

President Peters: Now new business.

A. Faculty Advisory Council to the IBHE

President Peters: A. Advisory Council to the IBHE.

P. Stoddard: Once again, we find ourselves in the position of needing to name a new representative from NIU to this Council. This is a group representing universities, colleges, and privates from across the state and they provide the faculty voice to the IBHE. This group meets once a month on Fridays and generally there’s a dinner Thursday evening before. They meet eleven times a year. One of those meetings is with the full Board of Higher Ed and they do get into the business of putting out position papers which the IBHE sometimes actually takes interest in. Some of you may remember a bit of a firestorm last year about a teacher prep position paper this group put together. We were not represented in all those meetings when that paper was being put together so I think it is very important that we have somebody on this and I would call – that person need not be a member of the Council or the Senate. That person does report to both bodies however so, if you’re going to be here anyway, you might consider – and you have Fridays off – not off, but if you have flexibility in your Friday schedule – I would accept any nominations either of yourself or people you know who you think would be a good voice for us. I would suggest that a tenured person would be a much better choice than a non-tenured just based on time demands more than anything else. So if you have any ideas, please forward those on to me as quickly as possible. The next FAC meeting by the way is going to be a week from Friday and it will be hosted here at Northern so if anybody is seriously interested in filling this role, I would encourage you to attend that meeting and see what it is you might be getting yourself into.

President Peters: Are you offering any inducements?

P. Stoddard: I believe one of the things in the Consent Agenda, I don’t see – talks about how we might support that – and asked that the appropriate committee look into how we might
provide some support to that and there are various models out there, some of which require
money, many of which probably require money, which means consultation with the Provost
Office might be in order or somebody over on that table. They’re all looking away. Anyway, so
that would be the inducement. You know, free parking is also a possibility too.

**President Peters:** In Springfield?

**P. Stoddard:** In Springfield ---

**President Peters:** All right. That’s important. IBHE is starting a planning process.

**P. Stoddard:** Right. Yeah, you do get reimbursed for your traveling expenses. I mean you
won’t be out of pocket anything but it’s obviously a big commitment of time and so forth.

**President Peters:** It will be an interesting year or two because they’re starting a planning
process where who knows where that’s – they’re going to try to replace the Illinois Commitment
that they approved several years ago that really guides our preparation of our budget and they’re
going to address such issues as the role of the two year community colleges and four year
degrees and – I think we really need to get somebody involved in that who can carry the NIU
position – faculty position – forward.

**P. Stoddard:** Yes, I agree.

B. Personnel Confidentiality Policy

**President Peters:** Okay. The next is Paul, the Personnel Confidentiality Policy.

**P. Stoddard:** Right, this stems from a concern I got from a department chair and I don’t want to
go into too many details in doing some research, I find that there are policies regarding
confidentiality of personnel discussions at the university level, specifically the UCPC.
Generally, the colleges and the college council deliberation have provisions about this but there
appears not to be a university wide policy governing the departments. If departments have it in
their bylaws then they’re covered on these issues. If they happen not to have it in their bylaws,
I’m not sure that they are covered in this issue. So I thought it might be good to recommend this
to one of our committees to look into what’s being done and deciding whether or not there ought
to be a university wide minimum confidentiality in terms of discussing personnel. Steve
Cunningham contacted me yesterday. He’s Vice President of Human Resources. He apologized
for not being here; he’s down in Springfield fighting for us even as we speak.

**President Peters:** For your pensions.

**P. Stoddard:** Yeah, very important. Anyway, he offered to put together what he can find on
confidentiality policies at the university to show the committee that we decide to refer this to.
Buck?
**J. Stephen:** I’d like to point out that some of these are covered by college bylaws such as CEET’s college bylaw which discusses privacy at the department level personnel committees.

**President Peters:** Have we ever done a roll up – I see Ken Davidson is here – on whether or not departmental/college policies comport with university policies or federal – we ought to make sure we don’t have any bylaws out there that violate any statues on privacy and confidentiality. He’s mulling that.

**K. Davidson:** I don’t think we’ve ever done a ---

**President Peters:** Mike.

**K. Davidson:** We haven’t done a comprehensive evaluation of bylaws of departments or colleges for compliance on this point I can relay. There are also ethical considerations I would also point out that may exist at this point but on an implied basis. So I would just start with that.

**President Peters:** I would make a suggestion that whatever you do, make sure you get somebody from – ask Ken to appoint an attorney to kind of track through with you as you do that review.

**P. Stoddard:** Okay. I’m looking at our committee list. I think that probably the most appropriate would be either Rules and Governance or Academic Affairs so I think a motion to review to one of those two committees would be in order. There’s also University Affairs I suppose would be a possibility. I see the chairs of those committees are sitting on their hands – so says the chair of Rules and Governance.

**President Peters:** Will this be broader than faculty evaluation policies or is it more generic to any personnel – I’d say Rules and Governance – unfortunately for Bill.

**W. Baker:** I would like ???.

**President Peters:** I’m not allowed to say that.

**P. Stoddard:** That was the chair of Academic – oh, that’s Academic Policy – I’m sorry – I misread that. I get confused. Academic Affairs – it’s Academic Policy which I don’t think would be appropriate. I think Buck is right. Either University Affairs or Rules and Governance.

**President Peters:** All right, all those in favor say aye. All right.

**P. Stoddard:** Bill, I’ll talk to you.

**President Peters:** Is there appropriate emoluments for William to take this on? All right.

The matter was referred to Rules and Governance.

**IX. COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR**
President Peters: Okay, now have you thought of any comments or questions from the floor? Yes, Brigid.

B. Lusk: Just a question about this Faculty Advisory Committee membership, can that be someone outside of University Council and Faculty Senate? It can be any member of the faculty.

P. Stoddard: Yes, this is true. Again, the only caveat is that person needs to attend these meetings to report on the activities so, you know, it’s just that much more time out of their schedule. Yes, anybody on the faculty is eligible.

President Peters: We’re still in council waiting for comments.

J. Stephen: I’ve got a couple then of course. One is considering all the press from last week, how are things going at Northern View. Are people over there now? It seems to have gotten a bad start and I think we want to save that as quickly as possible.

B. Hemphill: I’ll begin by saying that happy is really relative. We had a real good meeting with the community last week and a lot of good conversation. Took a lot of detailed notes of the concerns and actually had a meeting with staff today and I’m going back to the community on the 17th to lay out all of the things that they put out there were concerns and how we responded to them so we’re going to continue to address the issues that are coming up.

J. Stephen: Are you on timeline with the objectives that you set last week about getting certain things ready for the students?

B. Hemphill: Yeah, we’re really close. Everything’s looking pretty, pretty good – everything’s looking good at this point.

J. Stephen: It’s awful to have a bad first year with something like that.

B. Hemphill: I think everything – the way things are looking – the project will be totally complete by the end of the first week of October. Everything will be done and all the construction crews will be gone. The sod will be down thank goodness.

J. Stephen: The other question I have is that if we follow the Strategic Plan and if we’re going to encourage more multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary activities, that will require feedback from the deans to the department chairs about activities of the faculty outside of the department. For instance, when I’ve taught ILAS 101 or University 101, I don’t think there’s any mechanism other than you just fill out that you did that.

President Peters: I think the common sense core of that question – if we’re going to do multidisciplinary stuff, do we have the mechanisms in place to make it accountable and rewardable.

J. Stephen: Correct, exactly right.
**R. Alden:** And I think that’s part of the issues the Deans’ Council is going to have to tackle. I think that we have the collegial environment as a good starting point. A lot of universities, you have the ??? and the silos and you don’t have the willing of people to talk but obviously the logistics still have to be worked out. How do you recognize things that are multidisciplinary by nature particularly when you get into the multidisciplinary degrees – how do you do the glory sharing across departments. With respect to research, how do you do the indirect cost sharing and so forth but I think that’s probably something that we’re going to be able to tackle within the Deans’ group first and make sure that that gets translated down to department level because that’s where the action is.

**President Peters:** Fundamental question. Bill?

**W. Tolhurst:** Actually, I’ve been thinking about interdisciplinary research because I’m interested in it. In my discipline, the norm is becoming that we need to work with psychologists on some of the issues in moral psychology and the like and I found, of course, the psychologists are very busy as are well all and so it’s very hard to find a way to get things together. After thinking about it for a little while, it struck me that we have Research and Artistry Grants for people. Why couldn’t we set aside some of the money to fund multidisciplinary projects so that you would have an incentive that would encourage people to get together for a summer, start working on something and, if you could just use money that we’re already using for this kind of thing, but just set aside some for this kind of research that might be helpful.

**R. Alden:** In the Strategic Initiatives or Imperatives document, we talk about having a planning initiative grant program for these kinds of things. Not huge amounts of money but enough for people to get some release time, maybe a graduate assistant, whatever it takes to develop an initiative that would support of the imperatives and I think I’d like to try to get that started this year, maybe with some modest funding, and then go from there and try to do it as new resources become available. Once you get the policies and practices and curriculum set up, you shouldn’t need as much new money as just everybody agreeing on how the program works so hopefully that would give the jump start and we could use it for different – as one times – for different programs as we go through the years but that’s the concept and I know that Rathindra has his ideas on the research clusters.

**R. Bose:** I’m not going to respond to the research cluster yet but under development but I can respond to your question to the current restructure of Research and Artistry support. The letter in the proposal solicitation that I sent out, specifically if I’m not mistaken, calls for multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary proposal and the subcommittee I have who are involved with this proposal, they do recognize this. We really don’t get too many interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary proposals that the committee currently evaluates but that’s in there. However, the fact is the amount of money we give – the seed money – for summer support is much smaller so if you bring more multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary research proposals, that’s not going to make a whole lot of dent within the currently available resources.

**President Peters:** At my level, what I’m concerned about finding or redirecting – finding new resources to fund these great ideas that come up and I want to move toward a system where I
have a good feel that in terms of benchmarking, that we are investing or reinvesting a reasonable, understandable portion of our resources into these kinds of activities. I want to know how – where do we fit in the spectrum of American higher education – how much money we put into these kinds of new initiatives – I want to try to benchmark that. You know, it doesn’t always take a lot of money does it. Sometimes it takes time. I’ve always believed in many pots of money that many people can compete for for their ideas so there’s not one big pot or two big pots or it’s locked up. Lots of pots out there that are – there’s got to be something in them – but everybody ought to be able to compete for this. That’s sort of my philosophy on it so even though we’d all like to get into Rathindra’s money, there’s probably not enough there – but I’m really concerned about that.

R. Bose: Just one – other information – as we have seen last week, the NIH has now awarded 150 million interdisciplinary/multidisciplinary grant – that was last week and so nationally these models are becoming known and so we really need to prepare to compete for that.

President Peters: Buck?

J. Stephen: Who would have administrative oversight of these programs? Does that fall under – say they’re undergraduate programs – does that fall under Vice-Provost Seaver’s office or under the Council of Deans, or under President Bose?

President Peters: I don’t think that’s been particularly thought through or how about the President? I don’t think that’s – I think we’re letting a thousand ideas bloom.

J. Stephen: Well part of the problem I actually believe this addresses is if we have ideas, who do we address them to?

President Peters: I think that’s all part of the process that’s going to be laid out. There is a process which is asking for themes and so forth. Do you want to comment just a little bit about that?

J. Stephen: That would be helpful; I’ve had a number of people asking about this.

President Peters: This is just a little premature but he’s going to give you a snapshot.

R. Alden: Basically, as we developed in the deans’ retreat this summer, we want to make the start of the college level planning to have an opportunity for concept papers. Now these concepts can come from a department; it can come from a group across departments; it can come from an individual. It’s something fairly short and the deans would vet them as they come forward and then as a group, they would look for commonalities to see if there’s multidisciplinary opportunities where ideas are coming up from multiple places on the same type of theme. But the ones that are unique to the colleges, the better ideas would form the basis of some of the planning at the college level – develop goals for the college, strategies for the college, milestones for those action items that relate to the strategies and who’s going to do them so this will be the first starting point of trying to get some good ideas to start getting them into a prioritization that by the end of the year, we should have all of the college plans and be able to
say okay, what combination of things make the most sense out of the priorities that are coming forward. That’s at least the way I understood it and we still are – that’s a work in progress.

**J. Stephen:** So when I’m asked again, I just don’t send them to those guys?

**R. Alden:** Yeah. There will be an RFP process where the template for the concept papers will be posted on the web page and then you would submit that to your college level at the deadline. This will all be described in a document that is going to be circulated with the RFP.

**J. Stephen:** That’s enough information. Thank you very much.

**President Peters:** All right. More questions? Motion to adjourn?

**X. INFORMATION ITEMS**

A. 2007-2008 Meeting Schedule (Page 12)
B. 2007-2008 Alternate List

**President Peters:** There’s an information item on our schedule. The schedule is on the back of our future meetings.

**XI. ADJOURNMENT**

**President Peters:** We’re adjourned.

The meeting adjourned at 4:13 P.M.