UNIVERSITY COUNCIL MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25, 2009, 3:00 P.M.
HOLMES STUDENT CENTER HERITAGE ROOM


M. Dick attended for S. Clayton; J. Hecht attended for L. Watson.

ABSENT: Barbaglia, Blaustein, Bond, Boughton, David, Doerderlein, Feurer, Freedman, Greene, Hansen, Holt, Johnson, Krol, Lusk, Mock, Prawitz, Raji, Schneider, Seaver, Sido, E. Smith, M. Smith, Sorsby, Soucy, Thu, Tollerud

I. CALL TO ORDER

President Peters called the meeting to order.

II. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Stephen made the motion; Miller was second. The agenda was adopted as amended (rearranging, 2 walk-ins).

III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 18, 2009 MEETING

The minutes were approved as written.

IV. PRESIDENT’S ANNOUNCEMENTS

President Peters talked about Governor Quinn’s proposed FY2010 budget. NIU would see a GR increase of 1.6% because some things would be put back into our base budget, but basically we are in line with the average 1.28% that universities would get. Governor Quinn decided to use his stimulus discretion to plug the operating gap. The Appropriation Hearings is coming up on April 1 in the Senate and April 2 in the House. The regular capital budget includes $22,516,600 for Stevens Hall renovation and $2,787,000 in planning money for the anticipated and needed technology center. We’ve made additional requests, outside the Governor’s budget, for Cole Hall, for Grant Hall renovation and centralized chiller in the stimulus package money. Tax and pension changes would affect take home pay.

V. CONSENT AGENDA

VI. REPORTS FROM COUNCILS, BOARDS, AND STANDING COMMITTEES

A. FAC to IBHE – Earl Hansen – no report
B. BOT Academic Affairs, Student Affairs and Personnel Committee – Joseph “Buck” Stephen and Ferald Bryan – report (Pages 2-3)

J. Stephen pointed out some corrections that needed to be made to his written report. All 52 sabbatical requests were unanimously endorsed. Two members of the faculty who were on sabbatical last year gave reports on their activities. The Trustees are showing increasing interest in these reports. Jennifer L. Rosato was recommended for promotion and tenure and assignment as Dean of the College of Law. NIU was named one of six colleges/universities in the nation to achieve the Community Engagement Classification for Outreach and Partnership. This is an elective category and reflects our commitment to service in northern Illinois. External Reviews of doctoral programs were discussed. There was an Update on Degree-Completion Initiative for Community Colleges.

President Peters emphasized that our Board remains solidly behind the sabbatical policy.

R. Alden thanked Vice-Provost Cassidy for identifying faculty make sabbatical reports, stressing the diversity of disciplines.

C. BOT Finance, Facilities and Operations Committee – Paul Stoddard and Clersida Garcia – report

There was a written report only.

D. BOT Legislation, Audit, and External Affairs Committee – Jay Monteiro and Bobbie Cesarek – report – walk-in

J. Monteiro: FMLLA updates from the Board of Regulations were added as a result of the National Defense Authorization Act. Harper College wants to award bachelor degrees in two fields of study. The Veterans Educational Assistance Act provides benefits to veterans who served from 90 days to 36 months, including tuition and fees, housing allowing, up to $1,000 of books and supplies. The State Treasurer has proposed that we consolidate the five state-funded retirement systems into one system.

A. Rosenbaum expressed concern about the State Treasurer’s proposal, and asked about which groups might be address it. J. Monteiro suggested the Annuitants Association, and noted that the Operation Staff Council has discussed it. B. Cesarek added that the Supportive Professional Staff Council is also discussing this. D. Haliczer said that the University Benefits committee will address it at their April 23 meeting. P. Henry suggested writing local representatives.

E. BOT – Paul Stoddard – no report

F. University Affairs Committee – Linda Sons, Chair – report (Page 4)

L. Sons said that the University Affairs Committee has a report and a policy on relationships between university employees and students. They looked at a number of other institutions as to
how they have written such policies and tried to extrapolate the best of things from other institutions and then formulate a policy for NIU. They also had the expertise of our university legal people to work with.

D. Haliczer, on behalf of Steve Cunningham, raised two issues: (1) As it’s worded, there is no mention of the fact that many student workers report up the line to vice presidents other than the Provost, and so we’re going to ask for a minor edit including the other vice presidents. (2) HR would like to have an opportunity to look at some implementation procedures and enforcement issues. T. Bishop said that the committee felt that the policy could be passed without directly addressing issue (2). L. Sons suggested adding language specifically mentioning the vice president in the employee’s division. P. Stoddard noted another clause that would have to be amended as well. E. Williams said that we have a policy on our books and suggested some time might be devoted to reconciling (if necessary) that policy with the proposed. P. Henry and others raised the issue of other types of relationships (spouses, children, etc.).

J. Stephen moved to postpone discussion until the 29 April meeting of the University Council.

The motion to postpone was seconded and passed.

G. Academic Policy Committee – William Baker, Chair – report (Pages 5-8)

W. Baker reported that the committee recommends more study of the question of commonality of student evaluation questions, and noted that several departments had started looking into software that would allow for online evaluations of all courses.

W. Baker made the motion that online evaluations should be permitted but not mandatory; Miller was second.

J. Hecht, Associate Dean for the College of Education, gave a summary of his college’s efforts in this regard to date, including what their software could and could not do.

The motion passed.

On the question of evaluation of online courses, W. Baker reported that the committee had no recommendation. R. Alden said that an ad hoc group is looking at this question, including whether to have some questions common to all evaluations of online courses. W. Baker asked for clarification as to makeup of the ad hoc committee please. R. Alden indicated that the group included Murali Krishnamurthi, some of Anne Kaplan’s people and some of the people from his office. President Peters added that is an important decision so we’re going to keep moving on this.

H. Resources, Space and Budgets Committee – Linda Dersheid, Chair – no report

I. Rules and Governance Committee – David Wade, Chair – report – walk-in
D. Wade moved a change to Bylaw 16.51, to allow any tenured faculty member to serve as the FAC rep to the IBHE, rather than requiring that person to be an elected member of the University Council.

The motion was seconded.

D. Wade further moved to waive the first reading.

The further motion was seconded.

President Peters clarified that waiving first reading requires a two-thirds majority.

P. Vohra suggested that “tenured professors” should be “tenured faculty.” D. Wade accepted that as a friendly amendment. A further accepted friendly amendment was to change “Faculty Advisory Committee” to “Faculty Advisory Council.”

The motion to waive first reading passed by an overwhelming (much greater than 2/3) majority.

The original motion to amend the bylaw change passed.

J. Elections and Legislative Oversight Committee – Rebecca Butler, Chair – no report

VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

IX. COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

X. INFORMATION ITEMS

XI. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 4:30 P.M.