UNIVERSITY COUNCIL MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2008, 3:00 P.M.
HOLMES STUDENT CENTER SKY ROOM


Parliamentarian Ferald Bryan was present.

ABSENT: Baker, Barbaglia, Bond, Derscheid, Doerderlein, Elish-Piper, Freedman, Gupta, Johnson, Keegan, Mogren, Prawitz, Schneider, Schoenbachler, Seaver, Sido, M. Smith, Williams

I. CALL TO ORDER

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

II. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

M. Morris made the motion, B. Keller seconded. The agenda was approved as written.

III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE APRIL 30, 2008 MEETING (The minutes will be sent electronically on Tuesday, please look them over and a vote will be taken at University Council to approve/change.)

P. Stoddard offered some minor corrections to the minutes (removing conversational items accidentally left over from the transcripts).

The minutes were approved as amended.

IV. PRESIDENT’S ANNOUNCEMENTS

President Peters welcomed everyone and introduced new deans Brad Bond (Graduate Studies), Patrick Dawson (Libraries), and Rich Holly (VPA, Acting). He then noted that he will give the State of the University address on September 25, which will focus on our Strategic Planning efforts. He noted that we are undergoing NCAA reaccreditation. There will be a commemoration of the February 14 anniversary on Feb 14, 2009.

Uncertainty in the state budget process makes financial planning very difficult, but the President announced a 2% across-the-board salary increment for faculty and staff. He talked about the capital budget, which remains in flux. The renovation of Cole Hall and Stevens are in the mix, as is planning money for the Computer Science Technology Building.
The Illinois Higher Board of Education’s strategic planning effort, “The Public Agenda,” is moving toward a conclusion of its Phase I – a report due soon which will have a heavy emphasis on regionalism, P20 system, increasing graduation rates, and underserved populations. We’ve been discussing it because, probably more than any other four-year public institution in the state, we’re impacted by that because of who we are, what we are and who we serve.

Nationally, the Higher Education Act was reauthorized. It was a good set of policies in the reauthorization considering what it could have been. The President is now on the Board of Directors of the NCAA’s Division I Athletics and the Executive Committee of the NCAA.

R. Alden updated the Council on three executive level searches currently underway - the Law School Dean, the Dean of Visual and Performing Arts, and the Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies.

V. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Approval of University Council Committees for 2008-2009 (Page 2)

B. University Advisory Committee of the Board of Trustees – 2008-2011 – reappointment of Ferald Bryan for a three-year-term and Clersida Garcia for a one-year-term (Page 3)

The consent agenda was approved.

VI. REPORTS FROM COUNCILS, BOARDS, AND STANDING COMMITTEES

A. FAC to IBHE – no report

B. BOT Academic Affairs, Student Affairs and Personnel Committee – Joseph “Buck” Stephen and Ferald Bryan – report (Page 4)

F. Bryan reported that the committee heard a follow up report on the Ph.D. in Economics. An external review of the doctoral program will occur this fall and there will be a report to the Board of Trustees in March of 2009. Vice Provost Virginia Cassidy presented a summary of a performance report for pass rates for law and nursing graduates and the number of undergraduates meeting initial teacher certification requirements. The 19 faculty recently retired from 18 different departments and granted faculty emeritus status were recognized, as were the awardees for the Presidential Teaching Professors, Research Professors, Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching Award Recipients, Excellence in Undergraduate Instruction Awards, Operating Staff Outstanding Service Award Recipients, and Presidential Supportive Professional Staff for Excellence. Acting Vice President for Research James Erman presented the Fiscal Year 2008 External Funding for Research and Instructional Projects report. Finally, Provost Alden made a presentation on the proposed implementation of our strategic plan.

C. BOT Finance, Facilities and Operations Committee – Paul Stoddard and Nancy Castle – report (Page 7)
P. Stoddard reported that the committee, in response to the loss of maintenance budget line of $1.3 million per year, approved to recommend to the full Board a campus improvement fee of $6.75 per credit hour up to a maximum of $75.00 a semester. Ten of the eleven other state four-year institutions already do this with those fees ranging upwards from $75 a semester. The committee recommended several “pass-through” expenditures, such as EET’s ROCK Program and a monochromator upgrade for Physics. Part of financing for the new east campus chiller plant fell through, so the university is going to have to provide the last $800,000 of that project. NIU is 6th lowest of the 12 state universities in terms of tuition.

D. BOT Legislation, Audit, and External Affairs Committee – Jay Monteiro and Bobbie Cesarek – report (Pages 6-7)

B. Cesarek reported that as of the June 19 committee meeting, the Higher Education Act was still pending. There was a report from Ken Zehnder about the state budget. A report from Mallory Simpson indicated that the True North Campaign is spending much of the endowments for scholarships and that has quadrupled. The Finance and Compliance Audit had six findings that were noted: 2 financial and 4 compliance (compared to a statewide average of 9). Kathy Buettner reported on university related organizations and Laurie Clark provided details regarding cost recovery for February 14.

E. BOT – Paul Stoddard – report (Page 8)

P. Stoddard reported on the June 19 meeting of the full Board, which approved the things recommended to them by the committees, as reported earlier. Of note, the Board gave interim approval to the FY09 internal operating budget at levels essentially equal to those in FY08, approved a tuition increase for incoming students of approximately 9.5%, and approved a gasoline contract that fixed our price at about $3.23 a gallon after taxes. The Board approved our tenure and promotion decisions, and also approved the appointments of Dr. James Erman as Interim VP for Research and Graduate Studies; Dr. Bradley Bond as Acting Dean of the Graduate School, Dr. Richard Holly as Acting Dean of VPA; and Dr. Patrick Dawson as regular Dean of the Libraries. They also approved two new programs, the Ph.D. in Geography and an Advanced Computing and Simulation emphasis within the B.S. in Mechanical Engineering.

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

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

H. Rules and Governance Committee – David Wade, Chair – no report

I. University Affairs Committee – Linda Sons, Chair – no report

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

P. Henry asked how much of our pension fund is invested in Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. President Peters said that SURS has a very good record of diversified investment and their earnings always out perform the other state retirement systems.

X. INFORMATION ITEMS

XI. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 4:02 p.m.