I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 3:12pm by President Peters.

II. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Hansen made the motion; Tollerud was second. The agenda was adopted as written.

III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 4 (sent electronically)

B. Cesarek: recommended several grammatical corrections to the minutes

Kowalski made the motion, which was seconded. The minutes were accepted with the suggested corrections.

IV. PRESIDENT’S ANNOUNCEMENTS

President Peters: reflected on the history of the university holiday party and how it has become so large a gathering. This year’s attendance broke the previous records. He also discussed the theme of this year’s Altgeld Holiday Open House, which is career options for youth. This continues the focus on families and children in the community, which has been the theme for the past several years. Many university departments have contributed to the activities planned for the children and President Peters thanked the many people and departments who were involved in planning and running the event. At the conclusion, children will come up to the president’s office and receive diplomas, which, after all, is what most children really want.
President Peters: introduced Earl Seaver to update the council regarding commencement.

E. Seaver: reminded the council that commencement will be on 12th (graduate commencement) and 13th. It is expected that between 1600 and 1700 students will participate. Faculty are encouraged to attend.

President Peters: called upon Vice President Hemphill to update the council on H1N1.

B. Hemphill: The good news is that the high level of concern for H1N1 across the country has reduced significantly. Nationally we are beginning to see a decline in overall number of confirmed cases. Here at NIU we set up a system to be able to begin to track influenza-like symptoms and in doing that we worked directly with the Provost’s Office and we are asking faculty to reach out if they were to begin to witness a 20% absent rate in terms of attendance at classes. Three weeks ago we had 141 cases of influenza-like illness and last week, we were down to about 65 reported cases of influenza-like symptoms. At this point we feel that we’re prepared and we’ll continue to follow all of the safety procedures that have been put in place by the university.

P. Henry: asked if the university was providing flu shots for faculty as they did for the regular flu?

B. Hemphill: stated that we have not received enough of the vaccine to be able to give it to faculty and staff. Faculty and staff were encouraged to work with their local health departments.

President Peters: asked Provost Alden is going to give us just a brief update on the ongoing searches.

R. Alden: stated that two searches are in progress for executive administrative positions. The first candidate for Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies came in Monday and Tuesday (11/30 and 12/1). The final two candidates come in next week on Monday/Tuesday (12/7 and 12/8) and Wednesday/Thursday (12/9 and 12/10). Input from the council is important and council members are asked to attend one of the forums. The search for the Dean of Education is also ongoing and meetings have been held with the search firm that has been consulted. The hope is to have an offer out to a candidate by the end of the spring semester.

A. Rosenbaum: Noted that faculty attendance at the forum for the first candidate was very light and encouraged council members to attend the upcoming ones.

President Peters: noted the preparations for possible weather related closings and asked S. Cunningham to update the council.

S. Cunningham: reported that a memo was sent out to tell employees, faculty and staff, that they should use their own judgment when severe weather arises and travel conditions are difficult, unless employees are in essential services positions where they already know they’re required to attend and to show up regardless of the weather conditions. He briefly discussed the chain of command and the procedures that are followed in deciding whether to close the university, which is seldom done.

R. Alden: added that If faculty members live in a suburb that’s some distance and can’t make it in, they should notify their departments.
President Peters: expressed his optimism about NIU being invited to a bowl game and since there is a possibility that it might be in Toronto, the athletic department has made arrangements for all players and staff to have updated passports. He praised the DeKalb County Clerk for facilitating this process. He stated that at tomorrow’s Board of Trustees Meeting. He is going to give a status report to the Board and the community about the budget situation, our cash flow issues this year and then issues as we try to build a budget for FY11. If people cannot attend in person, the Division of University Relations is going to stream it live through the internet. The link will be on the homepage of the NIU website. He also stated that before Thanksgiving, he did a 30 minute interview on the budget with a reporter from the Illinois Channel, which was associated with the U of I and it’s picked up by many cable companies and is broadcast and rebroadcast. His expectation is that we will not know about the final budget until the spring. The big issue that we faced in the beginning of the year was the MAP funding and our students have been authorized for their checks in the spring. But the big issue is that the state is in arrears in its payments to us. The university has been relying on tuition and in order to meet payroll and other expenses. He discussed the amount of money that the university needs to meet payroll (18 million dollars/month), most of which comes from the state. He stated that we have remained solvent thanks to three years of fiscal restraint. He also noted that we did receive an 8 million dollar payment from the state on Thanksgiving but that the state still owes us 56 million dollars. He also noted that the state is behind in its medical and dental payments which is causing difficulty for many employees. He talked about the need for higher education, post-secondary education community to come together and make the case and the case to be made is it’s just bad economic and social policy not to invest in post-secondary education because it leads to better outcomes for the citizens of Illinois. He stated that all of us in the higher education community, public and those private agencies that get some state funding, have to be willing to support revenue raising instruments. He ended by stating that we’re headed for a fiscal calamity if this is not addressed in the spring. He also expressed optimism that NIU will weather the difficulties and be successful going forward.

V.  CONSENT AGENDA

VI.  REPORTS FROM COUNCILS, BOARDS, AND STANDING COMMITTEES

A.  FAC to IBHE – Earl Hansen – report.  (Pages 2 – 3)

E. Hansen: stated that the FAC only meets with the IBHE once a year and that contrary to widespread belief, he saw the IBHE as an ally of post secondary education in Illinois. He also reported receiving an e-mail that went to all FAC members on Monday from one of the Eastern Illinois district community colleges where they’ve already announced there’ll be no tuition waivers next semester and their funding had not been released as of Monday for that person to travel down to Springfield for the meetings.

A. Rosenbaum: questioned the discrepancy between the positive picture of the IBHE presented by Earl and the general view among faculty and representative of the faculty senates of other public universities that the IBHE was not a particularly strong supporter of post-secondary educational institutions.

E. Hansen: reiterated his positive view of the IBHE based on his experiences with them.

E. Hansen: expressed confusion about the group known as the Illinois Policy Institute.
R. Alden: expressed the opinion that it was a right wing group that is campaigning for reform to the old school way of doing gen ed, having 7 pre-defined courses that have to be taken. It’s a political, very conservative group that gives report cards to universities all over the country, generally coming back with “Fs”. He suggested restraint in meeting with that group or giving them any credibility.

President Peters: expressed the opinion that IBHE are currently allies and explained the difficult position that they are in that they are regulators in the eyes of the government but are thought by universities to be advocates.

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

F. Bryan: added that the Strategic Planning update from Provost Alden was postponed to a later date and they will meet again in March and that concludes my report.

R. Alden: clarified that the next committee meetings, assuming the Board passes them tomorrow, will be February 4.

C. BOT Finance, Facilities and Operations Committee – Alan Rosenbaum Waas – report

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

E. BOT – Alan Rosenbaum – no report.

F. Academic Policy Committee – Kendall Thu, Chair – no report.

G. Resources, Space and Budgets Committee – Barbara Jaffee, Chair – no report.

H. Rules and Governance Committee – Rebecca Butler, Chair – report.

1. Bylaw 16 – Athletic Board changes. FIRST READING (Pages 9-10)

R. Butler: This is the first reading of the requested Athletic Board changes that would require revision of Bylaw 16 of the Constitution. She called upon Terry Bishop who is the Chair of the Athletic Board to describe those changes in detail.

T. Bishop: Reported that the proposed changes resulted from the NCAA review that took place in the place in the last year and a half culminating in visitation this fall and led to our recertification. In the process of the review some discrepancies were identified in the language and procedures in Article 16. T. Bishop summarized the changes being requested and they are contained in the attachment.

A. Rosenbaum: questioned whether the removal of the language specifying that the student representatives be elected in the spring would lead to random elections that might more easily be omitted.

T. Bishop: responded that the Student Athlete Advisory Council will be asked, when there is a vacancy, to nominate and elect a representative. That vacancy is usually created either by the graduation of a student athlete representative or by a change in their schedule which would not allow them to attend meetings which are normally scheduled on Wednesdays at 1:00. So the event
which would precipitate the request to SAAC to nominate and elect another representative would be that that position is no longer filled.

A. Rosenbaum: asked if they might want to add language specifying that the election would be held “when there’s a vacancy” to the Bylaw change. P. Henry supported the idea of adding such language.

I. University Affairs Committee – Carol Thompson, Chair – no report.

J. Elections and Legislative Oversight Committee – Abijit Gupta, Chair – no report.

VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

President Peters: I’m going to call upon our Executive Secretary for an item of new business.

A. Rosenbaum: reminded the council that this is Donna Jarman’s last meeting as Administrative Assistant to University Council after ten years of service. He introduced Donna’s successor, Robin Anderson.

A. Rosenbaum read the following proclamation:

Whereas Donna Jarman is marking thirty years as a loyal and exemplary employee of Northern Illinois University; and whereas Donna first served as an Administrative Assistant in the Personnel Office and to the Departments of Curriculum and Instruction, Undergraduate Business, Journalism, and History; and whereas she has been the Administrative Assistant to the University Council and the Faculty Senate since 2000; and whereas she has now trained and been the right hand to four presidents of those assemblies, populated their committees, nudged and prodded their leaders to file reports on time, maintained the website, edited meeting transcripts and produced minutes; and whereas Donna is ready to begin her well-deserved retirement and move north to the Upper Peninsula of Michigan where she and her husband plan to open and operate a resort; and whereas today, the second of December 2009 is Donna’s last meeting of the University Council; and whereas she will conclude her NIU career Friday, December 18 and enjoy a farewell reception planned for a week from tomorrow, now be it resolved on behalf of this Council and the entire University that formal congratulations and thanks go to Donna for her long and faithful commitment to NIU along with wishes of good luck in her new adventures in business and during the rest of her retirement.

Presented this second day of December 2009.

The proclamation was approved by acclamation and followed by a standing ovation from the council. It was presented to Donna.

A. Rosenbaum: reminded the council that the formal reception for Donna will be on Thursday, December 10 from 3:00 to 5:00 in the afternoon in Altgeld Hall, Room 315.

IX. COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR
X. INFORMATION ITEMS

XI. ADJOURNMENT

President Peters called for a motion to adjourn which was moved, seconded, and passed without dissention.

The meeting adjourned at 4:28 PM