

OTHERS PRESENT: Armstrong, Blakemore, Bryan, Caldwell (for Weldy), Cunningham, Falkoff, Hathaway, Kaplan, Klaper, Nicklas, Stone (for Freeman), Weldy

OTHERS ABSENT: Freeman, Gebo, McHone-Chase, Slotsve, Thompson, Waas

I. CALL TO ORDER

D. Baker: Hi, good afternoon. Do I have a motion to move outside? And a second? Hold it we’re not in session, sorry. Call to order, just done.

Meeting called to order at 3:08 p.m.

II. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

D. Baker: Adoption of the agenda as written.

J. Kowalski: So moved.

D. Haliczer: Second.

D. Baker: Well done. All in favor?

Members: Aye.

D. Baker: Opposed, off we go.

III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 18, 2013 MEETING

D. Baker: Approval of the minutes of the September 18 meeting. Any revisions? Oh motion first, then revisions. Okay, motion?

D. Munroe: So moved.
J. Zanayed: Second.

D. Baker: Any discussion? All in favor?

Members: Aye.

D. Baker: Opposed? Thank you.

IV. PRESIDENT’S ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. Ombudsperson Annual Report (Bylaws, Article 19.1) – Sarah Klaper – Pages 3-13

D. Baker: All right I’m gonna go slightly out of turn. I’m going to ask the ombuds and enrollment management reports to be done and then I’m going to have my remarks. Did I just screw up the agenda that we just approved? So, Sarah, do you want to give us the ombuds report?

S. Klaper: My name is Sarah Klaper for anybody who doesn’t know me. I am the university ombudsperson. I’ll give you a very quick overview of my office in case you’re not aware of what we do and then some things I’ve noticed in the past year, some of our activities in the past year.

The Office of the Ombudsperson is a confidential, neutral, independent resource on campus. We work with faculty, we work with staff, students, alumni, families, community members sometimes administrators, of course, everybody on campus or has a relation to the campus community. We have a couple of functions. We are a resource for information. So if you are stuck, you don’t know what policy applies or how it applies to you, then you can contact my office and we will help you interpret policies and procedures or find the one that applies to you. Also we work on conflict resolution. So people come to my office and they’ve got an issue that they can’t figure out how to deal with, or they have tried dealing with it and haven’t been successful, you can come to my office and we’ll help you develop strategies on how to best deal with that situation. Anything from the status quo do nothing, to informal options for resolution, to more formal options. So if you need to file a complaint with somebody inside the university, outside of the university, all those things. Also I do mediation and other conflict management-type strategies. And the last thing, one of the last things I do, is to identify trends across the campus. I hear issues coming in my door or just running into people across campus and talking with them at meetings or whatever, and I hear issues. Then, if I notice that it’s a particularly problematic thing or something that’s gonna be getting bigger, then it’s part of my job to go to whoever the decision maker is on that issue and contact them about it and talk to them about it, not as an attack but to work with them, to alert them to whatever the situation is without breaching confidentiality, but then to talk with them about how this situation could possibly be resolved or to prevent that situation from getting worse.

This year, this past year, my start date was August 16, a year ago. In the first year, I did a lot of working with people across campus to let them know who I was. Let them know the office was continuing even though Dr. Griffin had left and retired and for me to learn the community. Learn the NIU community and figure out policies and procedures, kind of on-the-job, learn those, doing a lot of outreach.
My office, if you look at my report, we’ve done a lot of outreach in the past year. Some of that was a little bit of a challenge because my start date was after several of the orientations and summer trainings had happened. I missed some populations with that. However, I did my best to meet people across campus, the deans, a lot of, well the presidents’, plural now, and most of the vice presidents and different directors and faculty and staff across campus. I’ve also attended meetings. Most of you, if you are on any committees or commissions across campus, have seen me also at those meetings with you and because I’m ex-officio, non-voting on most things and it serves multiple purposes. For me to learn what is going on with that group and across campus, but also for me to serve as a resource to that committee or commission as to policies and procedures or other things that I’ve seen across campus.

It’s been incredibly helpful for me. I can’t really tell you how many times I’ve been in one meeting talking with a group or one person and learned something that really wouldn’t have seemed important and the next day or that week I will have somebody ask me a question on that exact issue or I will be able to help connect people across campus because I know I went to one meeting on one side of campus and learned about what was going on there and then the next week I’m talking to somebody else and what they’re doing really overlaps and you really should go talk to this other person because it might be helpful. That’s been really fantastic. It’s a lot of time but it is really fantastic and has helped me and the people I’m working with in my office.

Noticing trends: The main thing, all the trends that I have noticed in the past year surround a couple of issues, but last year was difficult year. Is that a good understatement? Last year was a difficult year for NIU. We faced a lot of challenges here. It had a huge effect on morale amongst other things. That was reflected in the people who came to see me, the people who came into my office from all walks – faculty, staff, students, everybody. It affected everybody. It was pretty serious actually. I walked into the job in the beginning of the year and things were okay. They had started to be a little shaky, but things were okay and it really – morale deteriorated a bit throughout the year.

However, then we had some things to help boost morale. I have to say, starting this year, it seems like things have shifted. The general sentiment across campus and even of the people who are coming to see me because they are still having an issue of one type or another, it’s shifted a bit. So it’s more positive. And so that’s good and so I’m hoping that the university, the administration, can help continue that trend.

The other main thing, the main umbrella issue is communication. That is two sides of communication. On one side, it’s people who come to me because they have an issue, a complaint and they need to be heard on something and they’re feeling that they’re not being heard right now. So that’s an issue that’s highlighted with students, with student grievance policy that’s in committee at the moment, as well as faculty and staff who, for one reason or another, feel like maybe their supervisor isn’t hearing them; they have a concern of one type or another and are being disciplined for speaking out. Or maybe they’re not really sure how to speak out and be effective at it and not be insubordinate, for example. That is one side of it. And then on the other side, it’s: How do you hear those concerns and then either account for them and acknowledge them and then deal with those concerns or suggestions that are being brought to you on the supervisor, chair, dean, whatever side.

A lot of this can be addressed through different types of training. The university is quite focused
on compliance training and compliance issues right now which are, of course, needed. I’m a lawyer, I love policies and procedures. I’m all about that so, yeah, compliance. At the same time, a shift of focus, not a shift of focus but an increased focus on those skills, such as communication skills, would really help in preventing a lot of compliance issues that I also see walking in my door. But the soft skills issues are the ones that I see most where people are mis-communicating, not communicating well, not keeping somebody informed of what is going on and why. It’s causing discontent. It’s causing anxiety, unrest. Those are the trends that I see. Communication is at the heart of pretty much everything that I’m seeing, saw in the past year, and currently seeing as well. But I’m happy to take questions or anything.

D. Baker: Sarah, can I ask one?

S. Klaper: Yes.

D. Baker: How many cases do you see a year?

S. Klaper: This past year, that’s a difficult question. I was – in the past year we noted approximately 600 cases, a little over 600. It’s different, we are, in this past year we used the same tracking method that my predecessor used. However, we noted that we used those tools differently than he and his staff used them, and so we came up with slightly different numbers. This year we are working on changing that to count things in a more accurate fashion. I might spend a tremendous amount of time with one person but they come back to me on the same issue, a different facet of that same issue, they might come back to me five times. That last year I counted as one case, but it really wasn’t. It was multiple, multiple facets of the same issue. So we’re reworking how we track cases.

D. Baker: Okay, anybody else? Andy?

A. Small: Sarah, on behalf of the staff, I just want to thank you for all the time and effort you spent addressing our concerns. I do appreciate the report that you’ve given. I do see one particular line that does stick out. You did mention supervisory training to focus on expanding existing supervisor training program would be a good start to addressing faculty and staff concerns. I encourage the administration to take that particular line to heart. We see those soft skills as continuing to be issues in some workforce areas and we appreciate your time and effort spent in trying to help with those situations and we also appreciate the administration’s efforts in trying to increase supervisory training to address those concerns of the staff. We appreciate your effort, Sarah.

D. Baker: Point well taken, Andy. Being a manager, leader, is one of the more complex things you can do. And I remember as a young faculty member, 30 years ago now, we had a guy named Herbert Simon come in and talk. Herbert Simon was one of the fathers of artificial intelligence and did a lot of cognitive research and a lot of management research strategy, structure, as well as individual human decision making. Won a Nobel prize with a guy named March and they did it on how humans really do make decisions and it isn’t the invisible hand of perfect rationality and economic models and he showed that we tend to not make very rational decisions, right? For you economists in the room, right? We tend to pick the first thing that comes along that kind of fits the basic parameters and not optimize our decision making. I hope that doesn’t shock you. And then he went on to write computer programs, Big Blue was the name of the them, that beat
the Russian grand master finally. And he was disappointed at the end that it beat the grand master because it did it with computing power rather than the algorithms that they developed. So he kind of thought it was a failure that they beat because the way they won.

Anyway, one of the questions of him, since he was a management scholar, was: What’s more complex, being a grand master in chess or being a manager. And he said easy answer: Manager’s a lot more complex. Because a chess board is eight by eight and there’s 16 pieces on each side and they move one at a time. And, in management, there are all kinds of pieces and they come in and out and they all change and the rules change. So to learn that is pretty complex stuff and most organizations aren’t so good at helping train up people to be grand masters. It’s hard work. It takes a long time. Andy, I think you’re right on target with that.

A. Small: I appreciate your comments.

S. Klaper: Can I say one more thing? Just how much I’ve enjoyed working here for the past year. I truly have enjoyed meeting people across campus and working with the campus on a variety of issues that are really important and I also appreciate how welcoming the community has been to me and it’s been a great experience.

D. Baker: Well, thanks for filling the role. It’s an important role and helps people get through difficult times when maybe we aren’t always grand masters in each of our roles.

D. Baker: Okay, moving on. Maybe I’ll do my report as a prelude to Eric’s report on enrollment. Earlier today Ray and Eric and Kathy Buettner and Mike Mann and I were down in Chicago. And we met with the executive staff of the Illinois Board of Higher Education and we’re talking about the budget. So this was the big picture budget meeting. Talking about what’s in the offing and what are we requesting and how are things looking.

There’s troubling signs pretty much at every level about the economy. In the global sphere, we’ve got slowing economies in some areas of the world. We’re still concerned about whether some of the European countries are going to default, like Greece and Spain and what not. And then: What are the ripple effects that come out of that? We have a national government that’s shut down and we hope it won’t be shut down too long but that’s going to have an economic impact on us. It doesn’t look like they’re being grand masters in solving these problems right now. At the state level, we have yet to solve the pension situation which is a drag on the higher education budget because more and more of the higher education appropriation is being spent on pensions. And so this year more is being spent on pensions than is being spent on operating budgets for the first time. The lines have crossed. Not good, so we need reform. Steve has worked diligently for the last few years on that and done great work and gotten wonderful accolades and they’ve come up with a number of fiduciary models that work. We have to get the political models to work too. As you know, reading about all that stuff, there’s still more to be done and we’re not sure when it’s going to reach a conclusion. But that’s another storm cloud on the horizon. There’s a temporary sales tax increase that’s gonna expire, what, the end of this calendar year?

S. Cunningham: January 14.

D. Baker: January 14. And, if not re-upped, it’s going to punch a big hole in the state budget. So
we’ve got a dynamic fiscal environment that we have to prepare ourselves for and we have to be nimble. I think we can get through this and maybe come out – well I’m not sure all those pieces are gonna collapse on us so, that’s the rumbling, but the storm hasn’t gotten to us yet. So I’m cautiously optimistic that we’re going to miss some of those storms, but we need to be prepared. They’re out there. We can see the lightning in the distance.

But I’m optimistic that we can navigate through this. We have roughly a half a billion dollar budget for our organization. We have an enormous number of very bright faculty, staff and students in this institution. We have a great deal of wisdom. And so over the next month we’re going to try having workshops to unleash some of those great ideas and figure out some action plans so we can be a better institution. We did some training for facilitators earlier this week and then tomorrow is the first of the workshops. Are any of you participating in those workshops? Great. Thanks for doing it. I really appreciate it. We’ve got a good cross section of faculty, staff, students and community folks and we’re going to get a lot of good ideas. So thank you for those of you who also volunteered to be facilitators. So we can tap that great resource and figure out how to better manage our institution; become more grand-masterly.

One of the things we really need to do is own our own destiny and not just wait for Springfield to wake up and smell the coffee and say: You know that higher education thing’s a pretty good investment, you know, we get ten bucks back for every buck we put in. We’ve told that story; evidently there are other pressures. There are other things in the current that are guiding them to fund K-12 and roads and prisons and health and human services and all these important other factors. We need to own our own destiny while at the same time we’re working on those political issues. And we’re working hard and the chancellors and presidents in the state are coming together to see how we can form a coalition and maybe coalitions with other people to move that agenda forward. So we’re going to work that issue, but internally we need to own our own destiny.

One of the biggest places that we can affect our budget is through enrollment and there are a number of pieces to enrollment. How many students, what kind of student, and what areas, how much tuition we charge, how much we discount with waivers and scholarships. How do we shape all those pieces so we’re having the resources we need for faculty and staff to provide transformational, world-class, education so our students are ready for their lives and their careers? So we’ve got a lot of people working really hard on this. All the colleges and most of the departments have active things going on with this regard. The Alumni Association is working on these kinds of activities. Eric is working his tail off on these kinds of things. Athletics is doing their part. We’ve got a lot of people, marketing and communications, working hard.

My sense is that across the institution in this regard in recent years we haven’t pulled the pieces together as tightly as they could be coupled. Our branding activities across the institution aren’t as closely linked as they might be. Our communication messages aren’t as closely integrated as they could be. I see great opportunities there if we could start pulling these people and piece together. And my sense is that the will is there to do it and own our own destiny and move us forward faster. That need for greater integration I see in a variety of places.

Information technology and you probably know, we have a search underway for a new chief information officer. Wally’s retired and we’re going to try and pull together those pieces vertically and horizontally so we have better integration, better service for all of us, maybe at a
lower cost. I see it in the budgeting as we put together a new budget model. We’re going to need to have a better integrated budget and budget model, top to bottom, left to right, that we can all look at and understand where the money is and how to allocate it to the highest priorities.

I see international programs as another place that might be very important for us in enrollment. We have huge potentials there. We have a 50-year relationship with Southeast Asia through our center on that. It does amazing work, we have incredible contacts there. We’ve got very strong contacts with a number of institutions in China. A number of deans have been there lately and we’ve got a visitor today and tomorrow from China who may bring us some good news. We’ll have to see how that goes. But I’m very optimistic about that. We have opportunities in the Middle East and Central America and other places. So these are all potentially game-changing opportunities for us to bring hundreds, if not thousands, of students to the institution and those students will diversify the student body, enrich our experiences and create opportunities for our faculty, staff and students to go overseas. The visitor that’s coming today and tomorrow has offered four of Rich Holly’s students an opportunity, all expenses paid, to come to China. When are they going Rich?

R. Holly: 18th through 27th.

D. Baker: 18th through 27th. Do you want to say anything about the gig they’re doing?

R. Holly: Yeah, so this is a music festival and someone help me out with the pronunciation, Chongqing [pronounced Chong Ching] which is large metropolitan area of about 32 million people. A week-long music festival, they expect 200,000 people there, so our students will play in the opening ceremony and then five other performances throughout the week and various other locations throughout the city. So it’s quite an experience for them and a great opportunity.

D. Baker: And you and I were chatting beforehand and I said, “How are they feeling about it because I’d be scared to death to go and play in front of a couple hundred thousand people. It’s like playing Woodstock or something.” How are they feeling?

R. Holly: They are extremely excited. It’s an interesting group because two of the members are a little bit older and they have traveled fairly extensively before but not to China so they are looking forward to that very much. Two of the members have never traveled outside of the United States in any capacity so they have excitement coupled with some concerns, mainly their instruments. But they’re looking forward to the travel and certainly the cultural exchange.

D. Baker: That’s an amazing area where they’re going. I’ve visited there a couple of times. It’ll blow them away. So, there’s an example, what a transformational learning experience for them and for us to be able to go share artistry with them. Fantastic stuff. So I think we’ve got huge potential there to change the face of the institution qualitatively and fiscally so I’m really looking forward to building on that.

Okay so, how are we going to get through these potential storms that are coming at us? Own our own destiny? We need to think about how we function. How do we integrate better? How do we collaborate better? And one of the primary areas is going to be in enrollment. If we can control our enrollment, we will control our destiny. We’ll control the budgets, we’ll move ourselves forward. One of the things that I did when I first came to the institution, in fact we started the
same day, was hire Eric Weldy to be the vice president for student affairs and enrollment management. He’s been working with Ray and many others around these kinds of issues. We’ve asked him to come and talk to us a little bit about enrollment. Where we are in this transition and what the pieces look like right now. So, Eric, I’m going to turn it over to you.

B.  Enrollment Report –

Eric Weldy, Vice President for Student Affairs and Enrollment Management

E. Weldy: Thank you very much, President Baker. When I was hired several months ago and well even before that during the interview process, definitely a lot of talk on enrollment, particularly recruitment of students. But as I have dug deeper into what we’re doing here as an institution and where we would like to go, I’m finding more and more that retention is something that is key in regards to our future success. When I speak in terms of enrollment, I’m speaking more than just recruiting students, getting out there, how do we market our university, but what are we doing to retain our students. So I’ve just been very realistic in knowing that it’s not an easy obstacle for us to overcome. But one thing that I am really encouraged by is that we have everything in place to do what we need to do to move forward as it relates to enrollment. We do, we have everything in place.

The one key for us, and President Baker had hit on it before, is as it relates to: How do we function and integrate better? How do we collaborate better as a university, as an institution? And so I have taken it upon myself to just go out and work with academic affairs, all the different areas, to really get an understanding of the wonderful things that we have in place, the things that we’re doing. But we’re not really branching out. I think there are many institutions that kind of work in silos and not really pull together and so this is a time for us to pull together as an institution. I just want to highlight some of the things that I’ve been doing just to give you an update and then if there are any questions, we’ll definitely take some questions.

One of the things that I felt that I needed to do when I came on board was to look at our admissions, look at our organizational structure. I really feel that, in order to compete, that we really have to move forward as it relates to our use of technology, our use of data. But also, from the standpoint of, you know, you can’t recruit as if you’re recruiting you know in the 80’s and 90’s. Competition is just so much more competitive out there for us. It’s definitely tougher out there. And so one of the things that I want to make sure is that we have an organizational structure in place that will allow us to compete and to be strong. So that’s something that we haven’t looked at before and so I’ve spent the past several months meeting with all of my staff, from the admissions counselors to the support staff to the associate directors, assistant directors, you name it. Meeting with everyone, getting an understanding of their job, what they do and how we can do things better.

I have learned a lot and so I’m at a point now where I’m making decisions. I hired a consultant to come in and to work with us, our admissions staff, and that has been very helpful from the standpoint of me digging deeper as it relates to our operation and how we work and how we can do things better. Many of you are aware of Noel-Levitz who has been working with us for the past few months and they’re looking at our operations across the board, our undergrad operations as it relates to admissions, our grad student operations, our scholarship operations, as well as our financial aid, looking a financial aid leveraging. And I expect that within the next month that we’ll begin to get some results that will be very helpful to us.
And I’ll just kind of give you a little example of one of the things that I have found from the standpoint of our recruitment attracting students. One thing that I noticed, in regards to our scholarships, for example, is that we offer a lot of one- and two-year scholarships and not as many four-year scholarships. Well that’s great for getting students in the door but you need to keep students. As you may know, that in regards to the students that we’re attracting, a lot of first generation college students, heavy need base, and so, you know, after that first or second year, they need added financial assistance and more than what we have been giving them. So, one of the keys to improving retention is from the standpoint of really making sure that our students are in a good position from the standpoint of putting them in a better position as it relates to paying for school, paying overall costs.

Another thing that I noticed is that we were pretty top-heavy with our scholarships. What I mean by that is, we have one scholarship, university scholarship, that’s four years, that’s about $26,000. The next scholarship is four years about $7,000. So you have a nice gap there in which we’re missing a lot of top students that we could be competing for.

And so those are things that I think Noel-Levitz will look at and find out as they have been collecting data from us and will give us some really good recommendations of where we need to go. That being said, in regards to the that recruitment piece, there are some things that we’re doing well at both the graduate and undergrad level that we need to keep doing well and not lose sight of that. Many times you can address a problem or issue and really take for granted some of the other wonderful things that you’re doing. We are definitely doing some wonderful things in a number of different areas and I won’t highlight any of those at this moment, but I think that we need to continue on as it relates to those things.

The second thing I want to share with you is that, as it relates to retention, I’ve been working a lot with Anne Birberick in the provost’s office. We have been meeting every week looking at a number of different issues and projects that we decided to take on as it relates to retention. As I noted, as I communicate with my peers across the country, I’m noticing something quite interesting in that we have a lot of things in place that we need to move us forward as it relates to retention, but we haven’t really marketed those things as it relates to getting students to utilize those services and resources. And so we need to do a better job of that as a university.

I was in Washington, D.C. the past three days. I was at a national conference of student affairs and enrollment management VPs and it was very enlightening for me because enrollment and retention, enrollment management, was really the major conversation that we were having around the table. But one thing that I noticed is that those who were doing a little bit better as it relates to retention had a lot of the things in place that we have but they were doing a better job from the standpoint of collaborating across the board, across the divisions. So that was very encouraging to me from the standpoint of where we are and where we need to go. But there is such a sense of urgency.

After that meeting today in Chicago as it relates to the budget, I mean I had a sense of urgency before, but I have been out of the state of Illinois for a while as it relates to what’s been going on financially as a state, and I tell you, we need to get our butts in gear. We do, because we’re not going to get the support that we really need from the state and so we’re going to have to really come together as a university, pull together in a lot of major ways.
Some of the things that Anne and I are working on is from the standpoint of retention. We are looking to hold a, and sometimes I hate to call it a retention retreat, I really want to call it a student success retreat, where we’re going to bring together key stakeholders, faculty, staff and students for a day in November, November 18 I believe, is a Monday. And we’re going to basically come up, you know, talk about the issues but come up with a plan as it relates to retention and how best to address it.

Like I said, we have a lot of things in place. The deeper I dig into what we have available, resources we have available for students on campus. And I’m real excited to have an opportunity to bring people to the table around campus and to sit down and to discuss these issues and to discuss: How do we move forward and so I’m very excited about that.

Some of the other things that we’re doing as it relates to student career success: President Baker asked a group of us, the provost, Anne Birberick, Anne Kaplan, asked us to look at our relationship with community college students, looking at our transfer student admissions process and how things are structured. We’ve begun that process on reintroducing ourselves to the community colleges because half of our students are transfer students. And so we’re really looking at articulation agreements: How can we build our relationships with those institutions? So we’re doing it across the board, we’re reaching out to students, faculty and staff. And I will tell you that a few weeks ago I was in Bloomington-Normal at a conference with a number of community college VPs, provosts as well as student affairs enrollment management people and I practically had to fight them off from the standpoint of they wanted to speak with me. They said, “Hey, we’re very interested in working with NIU.” And so that is a sign that the time is right for us to move forward and take advantage of building new relationships. That’s something that we certainly will do. I think that’s it at the moment. I could probably go on and on but I want to open it up to any questions that you might have.

**D. Baker:** Eric, let me ask a demography question. We’re up slightly in freshmen this year and we’re up just a tick in transfers or down a tick?

**E. Weldy:** We were down a tick, 1.7 percent but double digits.

**D. Baker:** So back of the envelope demography, if we have the same incoming class next year, how many students would we be down?

**E. Weldy:** We’d probably be down about anywhere between 700 and 900 students.

**D. Baker:** And why would that be if we have an increase in our freshman class?

**E. Weldy:** Because our retention is dropping like crazy. The year before we were at 70 percent retention, first- and second-year students freshman to sophomore year. And this year we’re 66.1 percent.

**D. Baker:** Let me ask – okay students first.

**M. Theodore:** On the retention angle, are there any talks of tracking of why students are leaving, the reasons behind them? Is there any follow-up?
E. Weldy: Yes, there’s been a lot of tracking and that’s another thing too and a good question Michael, a very good question. We collect a lot of good data, I think, but we don’t do a great job of communicating that data. The provost’s office has done a wonderful job in collecting data as it relates to what we call “leaver data,” students that are leaving the university. And about 40 percent of our students who leave the university, they’re in good academic standing, about 40 percent; they’re in good academic standing.

The issue for many of these students is that from the standpoint of financially, just not being able to stay because they are not able to afford. Now, when you think about it, we like to think that, yes, our costs are reasonable when it comes to tuition and so forth, but we’re talking about a new group of students here. We’re talking about first-generation college students. I don’t know about you but I was a first-generation college student, single parent home, and my mom was able to pay this much from the standpoint of my college education, that’s zero, zero dollars. Okay and so these are the kinds of things that we’re struggling with and so: How do we fill the gap as it relates to financially for our students? But also there are other reasons why our students leave as well, not just from the standpoint of financially. Yes?

J. Zanayed: When it comes to the financial aspect, are there any warning signs that you see from students that are going to leave for financial reasons? Is there any follow-up with that beforehand or can we develop something like that?

E. Weldy: There are certain things we have in place, for example, MAP-Works and other tools that we have in place. But, like I said, we haven’t utilized those tools to the best of our abilities. I want to for example, with MAP-Works, we’re able to track students to really ask some really good questions from the standpoint of their involvement on campus and other issues. I would love to see us really implement that more, for example, in our residence halls. This is a large campus and one thing that I have learned over the years is that, if you want to retain students on a campus this large, there are a number of ways that you need to use to kind serve as a net to catch students. Because it’s easy to get lost on a campus here, believe me, it’s very easy for a student to get lost. And so you may think, well, you know, we can count on our advisors to track students from the standpoint if they get in trouble. You know, hey, I could meet many students who could go through four years and not see their advisor or maybe see their advisor once. Another question?

A. Gupta: Just curious I’m sharing across my experience and then follow up with a question. One of the courses I’m teaching, it’s a freshman course and I’m really impressed with the quality [loss of mic] trying to track down somehow to see what’s happening, why they’re missing so that’s really good. But my question is: Since I agree some leaving financially but some academically, but how does the student background, has it changed like their incoming scores, ACT scores, their class standing? I mean, are we getting similar reports students or students who are less prepared?

E. Weldy: I had shared some information data with the Board of Trustees several weeks ago and so we have remained steady or strong as it relates to the academic preparation of our students’ GPA, ACT. I really, personally, and we’ll have an opportunity to share more information, the Board of Trustees has asked me to present again in November. But I think one of our issues is from the standpoint, I really think our students are talented and that they’re prepared. I do. I
really think that they’re strong and prepared, but at the same time I also think that, from the standpoint of attracting students, quality students, that you can attract a very strong student, but if they feel that they’re not getting everything that they need here on campus as it relates to resources and other things, then that’s a key to them leaving as well. So I know that there has been some discussions on the quality of students that we are admitting and so I really have to look at the data a little bit more closely, but I feel really good from the standpoint of the caliber of students that we’re bring in.

D. Baker: I’m going to give Ray my mic here real quick. Ray’s been working on electronic advising system.

R. Alden: Those of you may know that over the past the Office of Student Academic Success has been working in a lot of early intervention things, Doug mentioned MAP-Works. We have four years of statistics that show MAP-Works dramatically influences success in terms of student GPA, the number of credit hours that they take successfully, as well as first-year retention. Unfortunately, it’s just a volunteer system. That’s just a flaw in the way it’s administered. Many campuses that have adopted MAP-Works have made it something that all students do. It could be something that we could do just as a change in policy and culture. It also has its own set of infrastructure issues in terms of resources, but that’s minimal compared to the retention.

We’ve also been working on this student success collaborative software. Ironically, we’re one of the build partners and we have been able to design it to any specification we want to identify students who are at risk either academically or in other ways. Ironically, some of the other campuses around the country that have our student profile have adopted it whole hog and have really shown major success. We’re going to try and have the people from Georgia State come up here and discuss it as a way to intervene with students who are having some sort of problem before they get into too deep a problem because it’s shown to pay off.

Another aspect is the whole issue of engagement and career advising as part of the overall engaged learning experience and, of course, Doug has emphasized alumni and internships. This is part of a whole spectrum of things we want to be the NIU-value-added to bring students and keep them here, keep them engaged, keep them successful all along the academic path, but also be a life-long learner and be successful in their career path as well.

D. Baker: Other questions or comments?

A. Gupta: Follow up, so it seems like MAP-Works, is there any thought possibly to making University 101 a requirement because that seems to be where students get to interact with many services provided by the university. It’s now, again, optional.

R. Alden: That, too, is something that many universities have adopted that if you don’t have a certain, if you’re at risk, here again big data analysis is important. If we know the profile of a student who may have problems early on, and it’s not necessarily just academic, it could be level of engagement, level of financial support and so forth. If we know those, the profile, and we can identify, let’s say, the core tile who may be at most at risk, we could at least have them be required to take a UNIV101 or some similar sort of engaged learning opportunity where they get support, get engaged with the campus community and, hopefully, we’ll succeed from that. This is something that we’re working with. Since this is the first year that UNIV101 is falling under
the provost’s office, it’s a work in progress, but we will be trying to move it in that direction. It’s always had a lot of good sense of what college is all about. I think it can be a much more proactive thing engaging students in perhaps more critical thinking and more interaction and team and so forth. So this is something that is evolving over time.

E. Mogren: You suggested that 40 percent or so of the students are leaving because of financial reasons. That suggests that 60 percent of the students are leaving for a variety of other reasons. How do you see the balance or how do you articulate the balance between the desire, on one hand, for the university to be an outstanding academic institution and attract high-quality students, and the desire to retain students who perhaps are not academically poised to succeed at a major research tier-one institution?

E. Weldy: It’s interesting. I was thinking about this today when we were meeting with IBHE members and, from the standpoint of there are universities within the state that will have no problem recruiting that very top, top student. But I look in terms of from the standpoint of a state university: What is our role as it relates to society? What is our role? Our demographics as it relates to our student demographics are changing and it’s changing by leaps and bounds. For example, our enrollment of white students and black students has been going like this the past ten years. Ironically, the past few years our enrollment of Latino or Hispanic students is going like this. And so, for example, with that group you are going to get students who are first-generation students that may not be that top-tier student. But I believe that, as a state university, we have an obligation to serve our community and our community is what it is. It is what it is and so I think that as an institution we have to make a decision from the standpoint of what kind or type of student are we going to recruit and look to retain from the standpoint of retention. If we’re going to recruit students that aren’t that top-tier student, then we need to have things in place resource wise on campus to help ensure their success. So it’s a tough one.

J. Kowalski: Some of the retention issues are, obviously, academic and involve perhaps better ways of tracking students who are having difficulty and helping to forewarn them and give them a good heads-up that they need to take better steps to make sure that they’re following the correct program of course or working to improve a GPA in a particular program or what-have-you, but there’s also a human component involved in this. And I’ve been involved in the General Education Envisioning Task Force and we like to think of ourselves now more broadly speaking as involved with sort of issues to improve the overall undergraduate baccalaureate experience and success for our undergraduate students. But some of the things that we’ve heard about at some of the conferences that we’ve attended have talked about ways to sort of improve student engagement both in class but also provide better, let’s call it social support for students outside of class as well. Some of these universities or colleges, they were different sizes, exploring these have, you know, developed sort of student mentoring types of programs where a student who’s a bit further along – it could be a kind of an engaged learning of a certain sort – will meet with newer students and talk with them about things. Do we do that in the University 101? Do we have a kind of older student involved with the incoming students? I’m not familiar with it because I don’t participate in it.

P. Julion: President Baker has invited student leaders to meet with community members and not-for-profit organizations recently, and there’s been a lot of discussion with just us engaging with the DeKalb community and different leaders. So some of those things are being talked about, the off-campus experience and the social engaging of the DeKalb/NIU community. We’ve
been talking about it. We’re kind of joining a committee actually, so things have been in progress.

**D. Baker:** [Mic not on].

**E. Weldy:** Yes, on September 11, I hosted along with Joe Matty, as well as Gip Seaver from the provost’s office, we hosted about 60 alums and students, a focus group, looking at establishing a mentor, a student alumni mentorship program. We had wonderful feedback from the students and from our alumni and we hosted it in Naperville. We’ll have a roll-out of the program late October, early November, we’ll have a roll-out of the program.

But something else that we’re doing is we’re basically collecting information on all of the peer mentor and as well as alumni student mentor programs that we have campus-wide, to create a kind of mentorship warehouse. And there is so much going on across our academic colleges across campus that these are like hidden gems in a sense because everyone is, you’re just, the campus is so large we’re not aware of a lot of the wonderful things that are happening on campus. While we want to be able to recognize all of these programs and market them to our students, market them to our in-coming, our new students, market them to our current students, to really get them involved, get them engaged on campus. President Baker has given a few of us the charge to go forth and really bring this together and make it happen in a way that all students will have an opportunity. Every student at NIU will have an opportunity to have a mentor, whether it’s a peer mentor, whether it’s a faculty mentor, whether it’s an alum, to serve as a mentor, on campus. And that also goes in line with the thought of every student as well having an internship or serving an internship or two before their time here at NIU is complete.

**D. Baker:** One quick follow-up to that: When we went to that focus group, my working hypothesis was that it would be really cool for a student to have a alumni mentor from the time they hit campus as a first-year student all the way to the end and the students said, “Hmm, maybe not so much.” Their feedback was you know that first year I’m kinda trying to figure out where the buildings are and where the bathroom is and who I should be taking stuff from and I’m not sure an alumni mentor is the person I want to be talking to. But after that it would be cool. Now that was a small number of students. I don’t know if it generalizes, but it did kind of ring true after I heard it.

**R. Lopez:** All the things that have been said are absolutely important, and it’s true students may not want to have a faculty around their neck, that’s almost as bad as having your parent around your neck while you’re at the university. But something that also I know about first-generation college students, having been one myself and still remain to be, that undocumented students or internationals and whatever you know culture differences, we have a diverse student population and that is wonderful. That will grow, that will continue. But we also have to remember that as we’re doing all these great things, you also don’t want to make a student feel like, I don’t know, segregated within the university. You also don’t want to make them feel like second class or different from the others. They’re trying to avoid that. We work harder at helping and helping which is really important especially when you don’t have the support systems or resources. We also have to be aware of what goes on in the classroom when the students are there. And what faculty might feel is: This is going to be more work for me; can you go easy on sending me students that it seems I’m going to struggle more with? Now that couldn’t possibly be happening, but it does happen. Those are things we have to – and we do the multi-cultural curriculum.
transformation which is wonderful but I got to tell you it’s not enough. So we have to – it has to be a very aligned and balanced and we’re in the process of figuring this out but we also have to look at where ultimately the student will sit. The most important thing for me as a first-generation college student was I wanted to be like everybody else knowing that I definitely wasn’t, nobody here is. We’re all, you know, and so we can’t push at working so hard at sort of creating the segregating kinds of environments either. So it’s not easy, but I think having the conversations, continuing the dialog, hearing what students want and moving forward, I think NIU is really working towards that. And I do say working towards; we have a ways to go.

D. Baker: Other comments, yes?

A. Gupta: Just answering Jeff’s question. In University 101 not only they have a peer leader who’s a senior student and they can share also part of the assignment is they have to know about student organizations that are available on campus so that may be one way they get _____.

D. Baker: I had an experience with a University 101 kind of program when I was at Washington State University many years ago and we’d written a FIPSE grant, Fund for Improving Post Secondary Education grant. And it started with a critical thinking project; say we all want critical thinking, what is it? So we developed a rubric about identifying problems, about identifying solutions and your own biases and be able to look at it through different lenses and normal critical thinking things.

As we’re doing that, we’re also looking at our retention rates by quartile in the institution or incoming GPAs and, as you might suspect, at least at that school and I think most schools, the higher the GPA the lower the attrition rate. And so we’re really quite worried about that bottom quartile of students because we had a very big retention problem with the bottom quartile of students.

The staff and faculty there got together and kind of discovered an idea which was why don’t we use a critical thinking rubric, which if you have good critical thinking skills you should probably be more successful as you go through school. Why don’t we do that in University 101? There it was a two-credit hour class. And what they designed was a class that had 16 students in it and the 17th student was a senior and they taught the course and they were trained with a critical thinking rubric and they were paid with credit. The students, rather than teaching study skills and teaching technology skills, were given a project and they had to identify a question or a hypothesis and then go through the critical thinking rubric and say: What are multiple definitions of the problem? What are multiple solutions for the problem or the causes? If there was a solution to be identified, identify the solution. Why they choose it? Normal stuff; communicate it out using technology and then they had kind of a research symposium at the end of the semester where they presented all this stuff.

What they found was that students did really well at this. Their critical thinking skills went up more in that one class than the control group did over four years. And the control group was not the bottom quartile it was all the students in the university, shocking. The retention rate went up to the third quartile, parallel to the third quartile students and their GPAs went up to the same level as the third quartile students because they took one class from a senior with 16 other students in it. It’s a pretty dramatic impact.
So I know some of our folks, Anne Birberick and others, have called and talked to the folks at Washington State about what they did and how, and they’re thinking about how to integrate that into what we’re doing here. Those are the kinds of things, if we think about how are we helping our students succeed, we can really help students succeed, I think, more than just grinding or you know study harder, or take another remedial class or – so far those experiments haven’t worked so well. Anybody else? Any other student comments? Yeah, go ahead.

A. Roberts: I’m a first-year student here, I just transferred in from Truman College in Chicago; and from the standpoint of community colleges, I feel like the numbers are increasing because of that financial aspect and I’ve been involved in the community college level with Phi Theta Kappa which is our national honors society, and I think another two factors that really students look into before they transfer are: What they’re going to get because right now I’m a junior, so what I looked into before coming here was that what will I get in the next few years when I graduate. So that experiential learning and then the career aspect, which NIU is doing a pretty good job – the Huskies get hired program. So I think if we can look more into the experiential learning aspects of like getting more integration between like, because I’m from engineering. If we can have more like multi-disciplinary things to get involved with, engineers reacting with, interacting with the College of Business and other things like that. So I think if experiential learning and financial aspect are things that we could look into.

D. Baker: Great comments, thanks, Andy.

R. Leonhardt: When I transferred here from a community college, I transferred in the middle of the academic year so I wasn’t offered any merit-based scholarships. Has that changed at all?

E. Weldy: Sad to say, no, that has not changed. We have a deadline of, I believe, December 1 from the standpoint of applying for merit-based scholarships. But one thing that we are looking at is, up to now we’ve offered just one transfer student scholarship and one of the things that I am proposing for next year is that we offer definitely more than one transfer student scholarship. I think that will be helpful. And there are other areas that I’m looking at as well and the president and I have had discussions on other types of transfer student scholarships that we can offer.

D. Baker: Okay, anybody else? I see Chris McCord come in the room. I think Chris was hiding behind somebody. When I was talking China, I didn’t see you back there, Chris. Chris just got back from what 10 days or so in China? Two weeks. What time zone are you on? Chris was sending us back like 10-page emails every night from his adventures over there, seeing lots of possibilities. So thanks for doing that and the team that went with you. I think there’s some really interesting possibilities over there.

Let me summarize maybe a little bit and if I miss stuff, Eric, please comment some more.

We need to control our own destiny. We need to work hard on enrollment. One of the biggest issues is retention, and it seems like we have a moral obligation to help our students be successful, not to reduce our expectations but to help them be successful at the right expectations, and there are a number of things that we can do collectively. We’ve got a general education underway, we’re rethinking 101, we’re looking at support systems, we’re looking at financial aid structures. We’ve got a consultant looking at how we do financial aid here to maybe have a bigger impact on our students with the existing money we have so we’re spending those
waivers and scholarships more wisely. I hear over and over colleges talking about more and more experiential kinds of things that are going on in the classroom and outside the classroom, like with the non-for-profits here in the community, thanks for participating in that. Great project. I’m seeing a community around us rising up saying we do want to partner with you. We will provide opportunities. We have the alumni stepping up saying they want to partner on mentoring and internships. We have a lot of complex logistics to put that together yet, but they’re there, they’re willing. We just need to do the work, it will be sizable, but we’ll do it.

We have a lot of faculty and staff that keep coming to me with brilliant ideas. We’re going to try and have these forums over the next month, these workshops, to get some of that out on the table for all of us to contemplate and prioritize. And I’m trying to get all of us to think about: What do we in our individual areas, what can I do to effect these things? How can I help students be more successful? How do I help retain students? How do we build on the strengths of our diversity to make it an asset so we’re learning from one another? You know, I see that energy starting to really come forward in the university. I’m buoyed by it and that’s why, when I started today, I said there were going to be thunder clouds and we can see some lightening in the distance. If we can pull those pieces together, we’ll get through this and we’ll be stronger. We’ll get a little wet, that’s okay, but we’ll get through it and we’ll be a strong institution and we’ll serve our students and the state well. We’re looking at all the niches. Incoming students, freshmen, transfer students, adult learners, graduate students, international students. We’ve got a lot of fronts we’re working on. There’s a lot of stuff going on and it will take a little bit, but we’re going to pull it together and really grow our enrollments and help students succeed. So I’m buoyed by that. Eric, do you have any other comments?

**E. Weldy:** I just want to make one more comment in regards to the student alumni career success mentorship program. I failed to mention Laurie Elish-Piper and the wonderful work that she has been doing and so I just wanted to share that. Didn’t want to get in trouble. She’s a hard worker and so I want to make sure she gets credit. But I feel really good, as I said before, in regards to where we are. There’s definitely a lot of work that needs to be done to say the least, but I think that we’re in a good spot, I do, I believe we’re in a good spot.

**D. Baker:** All right. Well, we will keep talking about this issue. It’s one that’s critical to our future.

**V. CONSENT AGENDA**

**VI. REPORTS FROM COUNCILS, BOARDS AND STANDING COMMITTEES**

A. FAC to IBHE – Sonya Armstrong – [report](#) – Page 14

**D. Baker:** All right, shall we move on? Nothing on the consent agenda. Reports from Councils, Boards and Standing Committees, Sonya Armstrong with the FAC to the IBHE. Sonya, it’s all yours.

**S. Armstrong:** Hi. I’ll be brief. At the last FAC IBHE meeting, we spent the bulk of the time in a symposium on how higher education would be accessed and delivered in the next five years. If you look at the report, there’s a link to information on that symposium including one of the presentations. So there’s not a whole lot of new information but I will call your attention to the
Faculty Fellowship Program which is now official. I talked about that last year, but we now have an opportunity for faculty to apply to work with the IBHE staff on research projects, on outreach, on engagement issues. So I have a link there on the report and you can follow that if you’re interested in applying or you can talk to me.

D. Baker: Any questions? Thanks for your work on that.

B. BOT Academic Affairs, Student Affairs and Personnel Committee – Dan Gebo and Andy Small – no report

C. BOT Finance, Facilities, and Operations Committee – Alan Rosenbaum and Greg Waas – no report

D. BOT Legislation and External Affairs Committee – Deborah Haliczer and Rosita Lopez – no report

E. BOT Compliance, Audit, Risk Management and Legal Affairs Committee – Deborah Haliczer and Alan Rosenbaum – no report

F. BOT – Alan Rosenbaum – report – Page 15

D. Baker: Next, Alan with the Board of Trustees report.

A. Rosenbaum: I’m going to be reporting on the Board of Trustees meeting of September 19 and you have the report so I’m not going to go into it in tremendous detail. The highlights of the meeting were that the board approved our fiscal year 2014 budget. This budget was a little bit lower, $58,000 lower than the FY2013 budget because we lost a little money in the performance-based funding component and I think there was some discussion of the idea that the metric that the IBHE has adopted is not that favorable to NIU. Provost Alden has discussed this or mentioned it already as well. But if they increase the percent of our budget that is performance-based, that could start to be a painful piece of change. They approved the FY2015 budget guidelines. This goes to the IBHE. They requested increases of 3.2 percent for faculty and staff salaries and also for other expenses in the university and so I suppose we should keep our fingers crossed but, based on what the president has said, I don’t know how optimistic that is. They approved the FY2015 appropriated capital budget. This is where we request money for either construction of new academic buildings or repairs of academic buildings, I believe. The number one item on that list now is the Computer Science Health Informatics and Technology Center. Apparently these things stay on that list for a long time before they eventually get funded. I don’t think anyone is still alive who remembers when the Stevens Building was put on the list but that’s finally been funded. I think we asked for balloons or something like that, but eventually we got the money. So the new Computer Science Health Informatics and Technology Center is number one, followed by money for the Davis Hall renovation. They also heard an update from the HLC accreditation process. You’re all aware that that’s going on and then Eric Weldy presented a report, an update on our enrollment figures. This actually has some of the numbers people were asking about so I’ll just mention them. Eric mentioned a few of them. The new freshman enrollment was up about .6 percent. Transfers were down 1.7 percent. The ACT and GPA averages for the new, incoming students remain the same so they were marginally, I mean insignificantly, better but very close. Total undergraduate enrollment was down 4.5 percent.
Total graduate enrollment, however, was up .7 percent and, if you put it all together, the total enrollment undergraduate plus graduate, was down 3.3 percent. And, as you’ve heard today, there is significant concern among the board and the administration about these numbers and the need for us to improve those numbers. That concludes the Board of Trustees report unless anyone has any questions.

D. Baker: Thank you, Alan.

G. Academic Policy Committee – Sean Farrell, Chair – no report

H. Resources, Space and Budgets Committee – Paul Carpenter, Chair – report – Pages 16-17

D. Baker: All right, Paul Carpenter has a Resources, Space and Budget Committee report. Paul.

P. Carpenter: Thank you. I’ll also try and be brief. There’s a detailed report in front of you. A couple of things I’d like to highlight. First, I’d like to thank Steve Cunningham for the detailed information he gave us, some of which you’ve already heard here today. A couple of things to highlight from that which just reinforces some of the things we’ve already heard: The enrollment issue, performance-based funding, capital improvements, but also just to highlight the amount of funding that was put into improvements this summer as well. There are some of those things detailed there. Steve also provided some supporting documents which I hope Pat has posted to Blackboard. I haven’t had a chance to check, but I believe I can see her nodding her head there so they’re up there. I’d also like to highlight one thing and that’s that right now a lot of things are in flux and transition. There are a number of budget reviews going on and taking place. I’m encouraged by the president’s message and also Steve Cunningham’s message that the university community and the Resource, Space and Budget Committee would be very much involved in conversations as we move forward and look at university finances and the future university financial model. I’ll take any questions if anyone has them.

D. Baker: Okay, thanks Paul, appreciate it.

I. Rules and Governance Committee – Jeff Kowalski, Chair – no report

J. University Affairs Committee – Bill Pitney, Chair – no report

K. Student Association – Jack Barry, President – report

D. Baker: All right, Student Association, Mike you’re going to do it for Jack, is that right? Mike Theodore.

M. Theodore: For those of you who don’t know me, my name is Mike Theodore. I’m chief of staff with the Student Association. I just want to give a quick update on some of the stuff we’ve been up to since University Council last met. Since then, the Student Association Senate has convened. There are a lot of great senators in the room. There are a lot of great new senators who are really excited about the future of the university. They’re really ready to be engaged with that process. I want everyone to take note of that in case they ever need students for input on anything, we do have a great pool of them. In regards to senate, big decisions need to be made in the future, internally and externally. If you saw in the Star, the senate recently approved $16,000
for the student recreation center. This is introducing several different questions on the future of the rec. What it will look like in the future? It’s down to the point where a stable funding model is needed and there are several options for that. And James Zanayed, speaker of the senate, Paul Julion, director of athletics and recreation, are really taking the lead on that. So we’re looking forward for faculty/staff input on that as well I guess as we did last.

Internally, we’ve been taking on several new initiatives about engagement. How do we get students more involved? How do we get them involved with student organizations, with academics, with the community? We’ve explored many new options. Just these past few weeks we’ve met with a few DeKalb leaders. We had a meeting with non-profit leaders what was that last week, and they were really excited. Not just to be meeting with the S.A., it’s not just the S.A., it’s all the organizations we work with. And we’re exploring new ways to get them involved, then engaged, as well as working with each other and I’d say the general theme for the S.A. this year is student engagement. In so far as that, we have many resources and like Sarah Klapper alluded to earlier, many areas on campus are doing things that other areas on campus are already doing. We’re constantly trying to reinvent that wheel and it is very much so with organizations. So we’re taking on several initiatives to connect organizations to get the more engaged involved with each other. This has several different benefits. This means that organizations are able to save money. They’re able to get more students involved and also if faculty, staff, administration want to find students for input, you’re able to get a more centralized way of doing that.

So throughout the year you’re going to be hearing a lot of the new ideas the S.A. is coming up with to urge collaboration, to urge involvement, get organizations moving, get organizations involved with things they normally weren’t involved with before. So that might mean academics. That might mean the community. There are several different options out there that we haven’t considered and we’re going to be exploring them throughout the year so I’d say that would be our main priority and the main thing we’ve been looking into as of now.

D. Baker: Thanks, Mike. Any comments, questions for the students? I had the opportunity to speak with the senate last week I guess it was. A great group. A great group of senators that had a lot of great questions. They had a real focus on student success and student career success and had great ideas about it so I appreciated my time. Thanks, James, for inviting me.

L. Operating Staff Council – Andy Small, President – no report

D. Baker: I see Andy had to leave, are you going to do it? Okay great, from the Operating Staff Council.

A. Polzin: We really don’t have a report but I just wanted to let everyone know at our last meeting we did tour the new Gilbert Hall facility. It’s absolutely amazing but it’s kind of nice to see the room sizes haven’t changed so much since I was in school. The facilities are much, much nicer than then. We also had Bob Pritchard came and talk to us a little bit about what’s going on in Springfield with the pension reform and all of that. I probably should say what’s not going on but they’re working on it and we’re encouraged by that. But a huge thank you to you, Dr. Baker, for taking your time to come and talk to us. We appreciate your comments and continue to be buoyed by your leadership. Thank you.
D. Baker: Thank you. Great group and, again, great questions and good ideas on how to move us forward.

M. Supportive Professional Staff Council – Deborah Haliczer, President – report – Page 18

D. Baker: All right Deb, Supportive Profession Staff Council.

D. Haliczer: Okay, SPS Council says “hello” to everybody and we also were thrilled with Gilbert Hall. We got to tour there and I got to see my old rooms. That was fun. Been a while. You can read most of my report but I wanted to use my time to give a commercial. All of you, we’re asking that you look in your areas at supportive professional staff who should be nominated for the SPS Presidential Award. We’ll be sending out the announcement about that and that recognizing extraordinary service by supportive professional staff, please take the time to look around, nominate someone and then later on the president will select from the people that we present as nominees. Our deadline will be December 2.

N. University Benefits Committee – Deborah Haliczer, Chair – report – Pages 19-20

D. Haliczer: And, next report. Okay, University Benefits Committee. The benefits committee appreciates the opportunity to speak to both the Faculty Senate and to the University Council. For the last, oh heavens, 10 years or so the major theme has been concern about pensions and benefits as well as compensation and that will remain our concern this year. We continue to push for compensation and benefits, enhancements or protections. We appreciate all the work Steve Cunningham and the presidents have done on trying to protect our benefits. While we push for benefits and compensation, we also recognize the huge political and fiscal pressures on this whole process and, while we’ll continue to be pushy, we understand how complex this is. Thank you.

D. Baker: Yeah, thanks, Deborah. We had the same conversation with the IBHE this morning and noted we’re underfunded for salaries and we’re underfunded for capital issues so we can do repairs and restoration kind of work. We’re underfunded for new buildings and actually the board staff’s very sympathetic to that. They understand where we are. They understand we’ve been through significant budget cuts in the last 12 years. I think, what was the number, 28 percent in non-inflation adjusted dollars, that’s a pretty big hit to take and they’re – they understand but then there are these other currents and other pressures on the state budget. The presidents and chancellors in the state have been meeting. Our last meeting we all talked about getting together to have a common agenda for Springfield this coming year so we could work together and not go individually. We’re going to have a meeting in December to try and pull those pieces together. I’m excited to see what might come out of that. The work that the schools have done together along with Steve’s leadership on the pension reform issues I think have gotten us a lot farther downstream than we would have been without it. So we’ll see if we can continue to build that coalition and get some traction in Springfield. All right, any other questions for Deborah on either one of those?

O. Elections and Legislative Oversight Committee – Abhijit Gupta, Chair

VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS
VIII. NEW BUSINESS

IX. COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

X. INFORMATION ITEMS

A. Alternate Policy – Page 21

D. Baker: Okay, the last item that we’ve got on here, I’d like to call your attention to Information Item A and on the last page we have a policy for alternates. So if you’re not able to come the University Council we have an alternate list here and so if you can’t come here’s your list of substitutes to contact and to get to come here. So I just wanted to make you aware of those. You probably already knew those but Alan likes you all to be here and be represented, as do I, so I wanted to draw your attention to that.

B. Minutes, Academic Planning Council
C. Minutes, Admissions Policies and Academic Standards Committee
D. Minutes, Athletic Board
E. Minutes, Campus Security and Environmental Quality Committee
F. Minutes, Committee on Advanced Professional Certification in Education
G. Minutes, Committee on the Improvement of Undergraduate Education
H. Minutes, Committee on Initial Teacher Certification
I. Minutes, Committee on the Undergraduate Academic Experience
J. Minutes, Committee on the Undergraduate Curriculum
K. Minutes, General Education Committee
L. Minutes, Honors Committee
M. Minutes, Operating Staff Council
N. Minutes, Supportive Professional Staff Council
O. Minutes, Undergraduate Coordinating Council
P. Minutes, University Assessment Panel
Q. Minutes, University Benefits Committee

XI. ADJOURNMENT


Meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m.